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"I JUST LET THEM GO FOR A TEENY WEENY MINUTE," SAID DICK, "AND AWAY THEY WENT!"

The WONDERFUL LAND of UP

By

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NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

PZ 8
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18-20044

OCT 21 1918

Printed in the United States of America

#1.50

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CHAPTER I

THE APPLE TREE ELEVATOR

THE WONDERFUL LAND OF UP

Chapter I: The Apple Tree Elevator

ROSE, Dick and Jim Dandy had run off, that is, Rose and Dick had run off and Jim Dandy followed. Jim Dandy was a cat, a great grey creature with a tail as large as a fox's, long soft fur that you wanted to rub your cheek against, solemn blue eyes, white whiskers, and a tiny bunch of white hair on his chin (if cats have chins) which made him look more solemn than ever. It may seem queer for a cat to have long hair and blue eyes, but Jim Dandy was a Persian cat, whose real name would almost reach around the world it was so long, at least it would take up a line on my typewriter, I'm sure; but as nobody has any time to waste these days he was called Jim Dandy for short—sometimes just Dandy.

But here I am telling you all about the cat first when you must be more interested in Rose and Dick. Rose was a little curly-headed girl and Dick was her brother. Rose looked exactly like her name, for she was round and dimpled and rosy and always happy, and someway I think happy people are like roses, don't you? because everybody likes to look at them. Her hair, as I said before, was curly and a beautiful golden colour like that of a fairy princess. Her eyes were big and blue.

Dick was taller and straighter, and held his shoulders like his daddy who was a soldier. No curls and dimples for him, no sir! He looked like, well—just like a real boy I should say, and that's the finest thing, I think. His eyes were brown, so was his hair, which was quite short.

Just now he was holding tightly to Rose's hand and helping her over the rough ground. "Come on, Rose," he said, looking back anxiously over his shoulder. "Let's run faster! I'm not going to any photograph man and have my picture taken to-day—it's too hot. Besides that old iron thing hurts the back of my head. Don't you wish there was another circus!"

"Yes I do," agreed Rose promptly. "My, couldn't that old elephant eat a lot of peanuts!"

"And didn't that funny animal with a horn on his nose have a big mouth!" exclaimed Dick.

"And didn't that spotted one have a long neck!" said Rose, laughing at the memory. "He must see everything in the world!"

"And did you see those bears having a really, truly dinner party!" said the little boy excitedly.

"And the monkey riding a pig!" cried his sister. "That was best of all."

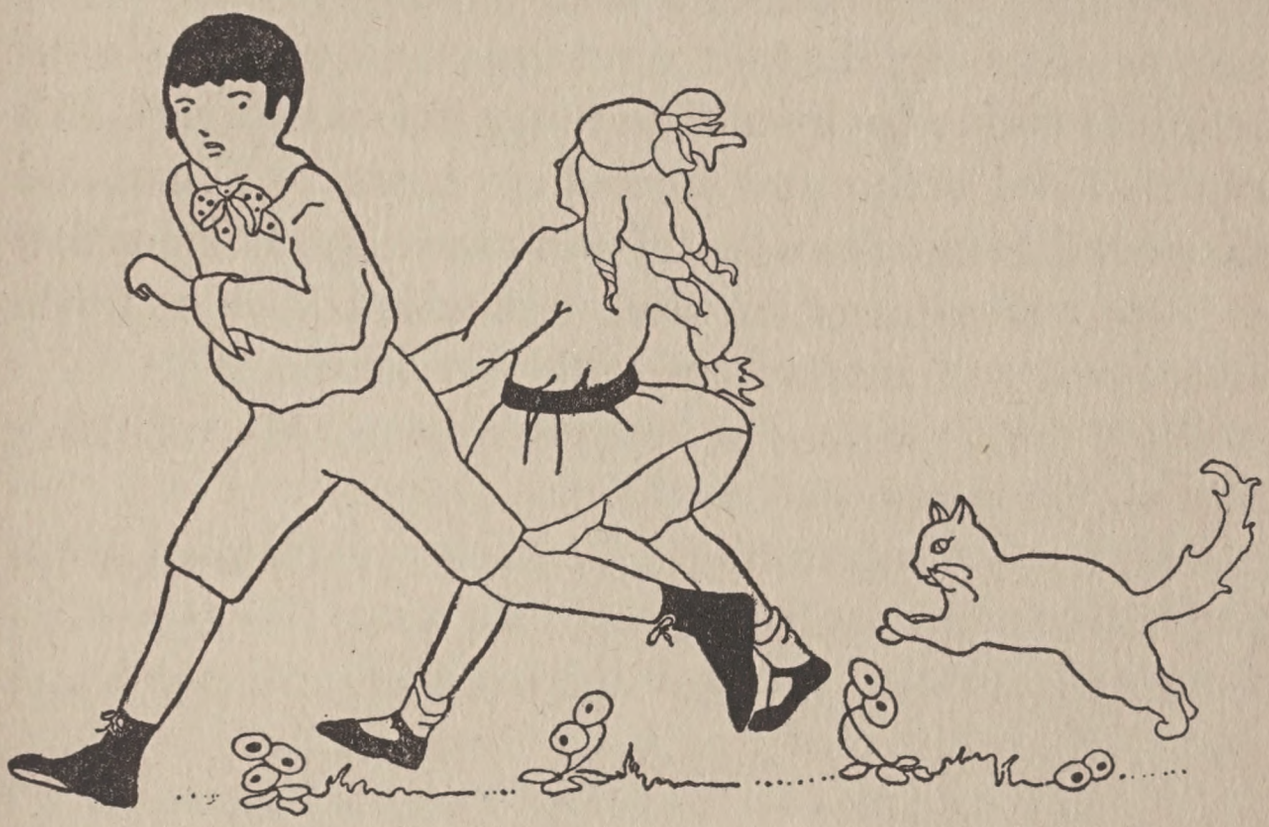
"Don't you wish we had some more of that pink lemonade?" went on Dick.

"And balloons!" reminded Rose reproachfully. Aunt Margaret had bought each of them a beauty and it was Dick's fault that they had disappeared.

He looked up at the sky consciously now. "I won-

der where they went?" he said, stopping. "I wish I hadn't tied them together. I just let go for a teeny weeny minute, and away they went. It almost seemed as though they were waiting to get away, they flew up in the air so fast, I wonder if they'll ever come down!"

"Mother said they wouldn't," answered Rose sadly.



He was holding tightly to Rose's hand and helping her over the rough ground.

"Then, where do all the lost balloons go? They can't keep on going up, up, up all the time and never stop, can they?"

This was too much for Rose. "I don't know," she said slowly, rubbing her eyes with a moist little fist. The day was warm and the rough ground tired her sturdy little legs. Besides it was almost nap time, for in the country where everybody got up very early, Rose and

Dick were put to bed every afternoon for an hour's rest. "Where are we going, Dickie?" she yawned.

"Let's go to the orchard; Aunt Margaret and Mother won't think of looking there. It will be too late for our bath anyway, and they can't dress us up to take us to town. I don't want my picture taken," he declared again, and then like Rose he, too, yawned before he knew it. But he had a soldier's spirit and was not going to be beaten by a little thing like sleep. He gave Rose's hand a tug and started on again. "Come on," he said, "it isn't far now. I can smell the blossoms."

Sure enough, coming out of the high bushes by the fence they saw the orchard right before them, all white and pink with a million lovely blossoms. It was May and all the world was beautiful.

"How pretty everything is, Dick!" exclaimed Rose, suddenly forgetting how sleepy she was. "It's just like fairyland, isn't it! Do you suppose there are any fairies here?" she whispered excitedly.

"No, of course not," scoffed Dick. "There aren't such things as fairies. Butch Flannigan told me so." Butch Flannigan was the big boy who lived back of Dick's house in the city.

Rose looked ready to cry. "Oh, I wish there were, don't you! They're such pretty little things and they make such beautiful things happen. Aren't you sorry there aren't any fairies, Dickie?"

"N-n-yes," he admitted finally, looking around to make sure there was no one but Rose to hear. Isn't it funny that boys rather hate to acknowledge that they like fairies? I wonder why it is!

They were in the orchard now and the trees made a great pink and white roof over their heads. Here and there little patches of blue sky peeped through, and birds of all kinds flew gaily about among the branches; dear little yellow orioles, big fat robins, blue birds—oh, just all the kinds of birds you can think of almost, the daddy birds making a great fuss as they chattered to the mother birds sitting on the eggs in the nests.

Suddenly Dick thought of something and dropped to his knees. "Dandy," he said to the cat, "the birds don't like you. They think you will hurt them. You'll have to be very good now and stay off the trees."

But Dandy did not answer of course.

"Oh, I wish cats could talk!" cried Rose, little thinking that her remark was overheard by some one else besides her companion. In the meantime Dick's sharp eyes had suddenly discovered something and he was staring with all his might right up into the big apple tree over their heads.

"Look, Rose, look!" he cried. "There's a little house up there! I'll bet it's the one Daddy made when he was a little boy. Don't you remember, Grandma told us about it yesterday. Come on, let's climb up and see what it's like inside. Come on, Dandy, you may come too if you don't hurt the birds. Hurrah!"

Now you may think little girls can't climb trees, but that's because you don't know Rose; for Rose did climb this one, you see, as quickly as her brother or the cat. She had always been with boys and played with them, so she couldn't very well help learning to run and jump and climb and do all sorts of things just as they did.

Of course, apple trees are sort of crooked and lumpy, you know, and there are always good places to put your feet, which helps some, but anyway they all got up to the little house in no time, and crawled inside, and there they were, as snug as could be, hidden away from the whole wide world except the birds and bees—and something else. But I'm not going to tell you about that just yet.

The little house had a door and there was a window on each side so they could look around. "Isn't it just great!" cried Dick, who liked to use grown-up words like his daddy. "Aren't you glad we came!"

"Yes," said Rose, eagerly examining the little place where pictures and names had long ago been carved on almost every board. "What do you s'pose this thing's for?" She had discovered an old iron handle fastened to the floor—a brake off a farm wagon is what it was, although the children didn't know it—and wiggled it back and forth curiously.

Dick pulled it back and forth, too, but without any result. "I don't know!" he gave up finally, letting it go and looking around. He yawned again; so did Rose. They were getting very sleepy. Dandy had already curled himself up on some old straw in a corner and was taking a nap.

"Let's stay here all the time," suggested Rose. "Big houses don't smell beautiful like this, do they?"

"No," answered Dick sleepily, sitting down on the floor and yawning again. Rose curled up beside him, her mass of yellow curls on his shoulder.

"I hear something a' buzzing," she said drowsily.

Suddenly the little house began to move.

"It's the bees," explained Dick, "after the honey in the blossoms."

Away over the fields came the faint tinkle of a cow-bell; that, with the twittering of the birds and the lazy droning of the bees were the only sounds in that great wonderful pink and white world where Rose and Dick and Jim Dandy lay hiding.

Tinkle—chirp—buzz! Tinkle—chirp—buzz! How quiet the world was; how comfortable and quiet!

Suddenly the little house began to move, slowly at first and then more quickly. Up, up in the air it went with a soft buzzing sound exactly like the elevator in the big store in town where Mother had bought them new hats. Why, it *was* an elevator! There was the bell ringing, some one wanting to get on likely, and there

was the thing to run it with and everything. Dick knew now what the queer iron thing was for, the little house was a really, truly elevator after all, and they were having a beautiful ride right up into the sky. How stupid of them not to have noticed before that it wasn't a playhouse at all!

But the most wonderful thing of all was the person who was running it. He had suddenly appeared from nowhere and was now pushing the iron handle this way and that and finally stopped the car altogether. He turned around then, and when the children saw his face they were still more surprised, for if his clothes were odd, his face, too, was certainly quite as unusual. In fact, the little man was very queer looking indeed, and yet they liked him instantly, his little peering eyes had such a kindly look, and the lines on his face showed that he was accustomed to smiling.

"Hello, children!" he said in the kindest voice in the world, I mean in the tree, or in the sky, or wherever they were. Really, since that elevator began to move I'm all mixed up. I just don't know where they were exactly. You see when fairies begin to take a hand in things, we world people don't know so much as we think we do.

"Hello, children!" repeated the fairy. Oh, yes, he was a fairy all right, even if he wasn't beautiful. Rose was wrong about them all being pretty. Fairies believe in the saying, "Handsome is as handsome does!" You've heard that, haven't you? And so long as they are doing nice things they don't care a fig how they look, although later the children discovered that the little

man didn't like to be considered ugly either. He was really quite sensitive about his appearance.

"How do you do," said Rose and Dick and Dandy all together; yes, indeed, Dandy too! The little girl and boy were startled to hear the cat speak and turning quickly were still more surprised to find that he had suddenly grown to almost their own size and was standing on his two hind legs as naturally as though he had done so all his life.

"I am glad to see that you are more polite than I am," said the little man, "but I always say 'Hello' so people won't be afraid of me. Now I'll tell you my name. It's Wisp." And he made a deep bow. "I'm general handy man to His Majesty the King of the Wonderful Land of Up, and I was sent to take you on an adventure, so if you'll just be careful to keep your heads inside, we'll start right away. Ding, dong, all aboard!"

And as Wisp moved the brake the little apple tree elevator shot up into the wonderful world of adventure, to the children's amazement and delight.

CHAPTER II
THE LAND OF LOST BALLOONS

Chapter II: The Land of Lost Balloons

THE little elevator shot up through a shaft of apple blossoms. Rose and Dick supposed it would reach the top of the tree and then stop, but not so, they kept on going. But the tree, too, seemed to be getting taller all the time just as Jack's beanstalk did, and whenever the children looked out of a little window or out of the door, there were the branches with their tiny green leaves and lovely flowers, all around them.

But when they looked down through the spaces between the boughs, then they could see the great world below getting farther and farther away, the orchard, Grandma's big white house with its red chimneys, the lake, and the town far away with its church steeples sticking up like little sharp needles. For everything looked little now.

The view made Dick thoughtful—surely he had seen something like it before. He tried and tried to think what it was and then suddenly he remembered. "I know what it looks like, Rose, it's the 'Bird's Eye View of Silverport,' that hangs over Grandma's writing desk. Don't you know we always wondered why things looked so little but we know now, don't we?"

"Does it make you dizzy up so high?" asked Wisp. "We haven't far to go now."

"Not so very," Dick answered for all three. "Where —where are we going, please?"

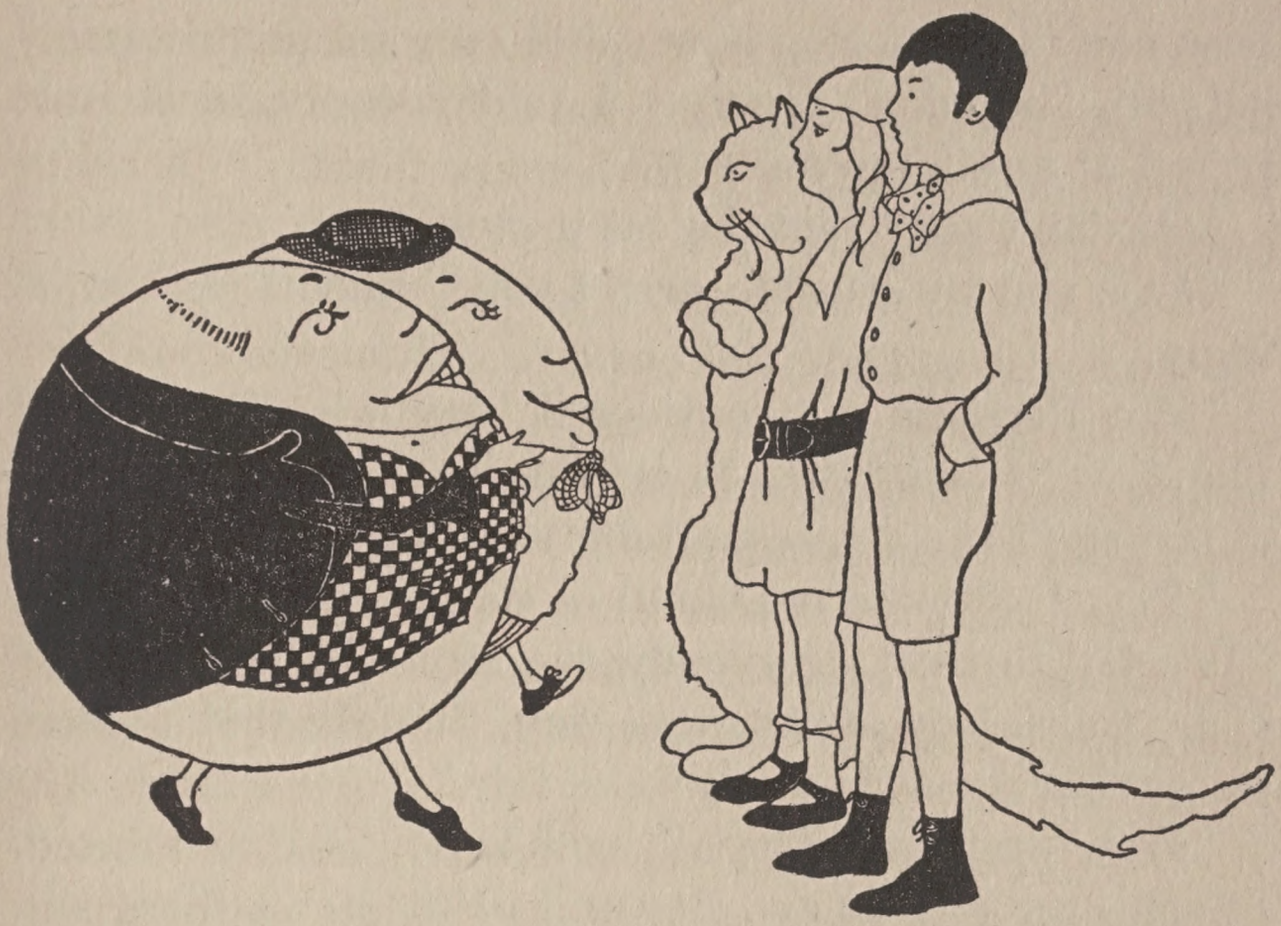
"To the very place you were talking about this afternoon," explained their new friend, "to the Land of Lost Balloons. Perhaps we'll find yours there, in fact I'm quite sure we shall."

"Oh, goody!" cried Rose.

But boy-like, Dick was curious. He never could get over asking questions, although his mother had told him it was a bad habit to be too inquisitive. "Are there any more places like that up here?" he asked.

To his surprise it was Jim Dandy who answered. "Of course there are, lots of them. Do you suppose the one Jack's giant lived in was the only one? I have several friends who have been around a bit, Puss-In-Boots, and The Cat-Who-Went-To-London-To-See-the-Queen, also The Cat-With-the-Fiddle, all of whom have travelled a great deal and told me about it. Of course The Cat-With-the-Fiddle hasn't travelled much himself, but his bosom friend, The Cow-That-Jumped-Over-the-Moon, told him there were many countries up in the air and it was a shame the children didn't know more about them."

Wisp was nodding his head rapidly with approval, he was glad to hear the cat talk so. "You're quite right about it, Jim Dandy," he said, "and that's one reason why His Imperial Majesty, the King of the Wonderful Land of Up, sent me down to the earth to get you. He was tired of being neglected by the children. All the story books are full of forest fairies, and water fairies, and flower fairies, and I've even heard of corn-meal fairies and coal-box fairies, but did you ever hear of up-in-the-air fairies? No siree Bob! And after you know



"Hello," they said, glad to greet their old friends.

a thing or two about us you'll wonder how in the world you could ever manage to get along without our help. Now don't be surprised, please, at anything you may see. We're there now. Remember that in fairyland magical things are likely to happen at any minute." Wisp gave the iron handle a jerk and the elevator stopped. Then he stepped out of the little door and motioned for the children to follow him. Their feet had scarcely touched the ground, however, when the apple tree disappeared, blossoms, elevator and all.

Rose and Dick didn't know which surprised them most, the wonderful country in which they now found themselves or the disappearance of the tree. They must have looked very funny, for Wisp laughed. "I sup-

pose you're wondering how you'll ever get home again," he said, "but don't worry. I told you not to be surprised at anything you saw."

"Or don't see," said the cat meaningly.

"Say, you *are* sensible, aren't you?" said Wisp admiringly.

"We Persians are considered very wise," answered Dandy. "It's a relief to be able to speak one's mind at last and to be of a respectable size so one is noticed."

"Yes, I suppose it is kind of nice," answered Wisp. "We try to treat everybody the same in the Land of Up. Fairies are always that way, though; that's where we get our name, because we're fair."

"How pretty it is here!" said Rose, looking around. "Such pretty trees and flowers! But aren't there any houses or people, Mr. Wisp?"

"Yes," answered Wisp, "we are going to the town, and then you'll see lots of people. They will be sending for us soon now; we'll not have to walk." His eyes twinkled as he spoke, but if he had any secret he did not tell what it was. "Say, children," he asked, changing the subject, "do I look all right? I got my hands soiled on that brake and then forgot and scratched my nose. I sort of think I see a black spot," and Wisp tried to see the end of it, his nose I mean, which of course made his eyes cross and he looked ever so funny. It made the children laugh.

"You'll stay that way, Mr. Wisp, you mustn't do that," cried Dick. "Mother won't let us, not even in fun."

"No, I suppose I shouldn't," sighed Wisp, uncrossing

his eyes again and reaching for his handkerchief. "But then I'm so ugly it wouldn't make much difference, would it?" There was a note of wistfulness in his voice which both children noticed instantly, and they cried together, "You're not ugly, Wisp."

"You're beautiful!" added Rose, which was kind of her, considering that Wisp had a long sharp nose, a very sharp chin that stuck out a good bit, and rather crooked legs. His short trousers and jacket were purple, his shirt a sort of lemon yellow, which any one will tell you is hard on the complexion, and his cap purple and yellow also, which, of course, very few people can wear becomingly.

Instantly Wisp's face brightened.

"Oh, I'm so glad you think so," he said gratefully. "I feel much better now."

"And as I come of a royal family," spoke up Jim Dandy, "I admire the colour of your suit. I adore purple."

"This is delightful!" exclaimed Wisp, who was now beaming with pleasure. "I never had so many compliments before in my life." Then he stopped suddenly and listened intently. "Here they come now," he said mysteriously.

"Who?" asked Dick.

"The searchers!" said Wisp.

"The searchers?"

"Yes, they're going to look in all your pockets and over your clothes."

"But—but we didn't take anything!" stammered the little boy, and Rose looked ready to cry.

Wisp winked one eye. "No, but you might have concealed weapons. You wouldn't want to kill any one, would you?"

"Weapons?" exclaimed Dick. "You mean swords and guns and things. We haven't any!" He was getting very indignant.

"Good gracious no, of course you haven't!" agreed the fairy, "but you don't kill balloons with swords and guns. It's pins. You are to be searched for pins and matches you know."

"Oh!" cried Dick and Rose and even Jim Dandy, much relieved. But there was no time to say anything more for two balloons came running up just then, yes running, for they had arms and legs and round jolly faces. Instantly the children recognised the balloons they had lost.

"Hello!" they said, glad to see their old friends.

"Hello!" answered the balloons. "We are awfully glad to see you. It was kind of Wisp to bring you to our country and we hope you'll enjoy it, but everybody who comes here must be searched. We have been appointed chief searchers for to-day, and I'm afraid we'll have to go through your pockets. You see pins and matches are not allowed in this land, for circus balloons like us collapse and die at the very sight of a pin almost," here the balloons shuddered, "and Fourth-of-July paper balloons simply blaze with fury at the sight of a match. Here Wispy," they went on, "you smooth Dandy's sharp nails, will you?" And the red balloon handed the fairy a piece of sand paper. Even files were not allowed there, you see.

"Why did you run away?" asked Rose while her own blue balloon was searching her everywhere for pins, and the red one was searching Dick for matches.

"Oh, we just got homesick," said the balloon, "so we thought we'd come back. Besides we thought we had given you enough pleasure for ten cents, I mean for one day; and once Dick squeezed Reddy Bounce here so hard he came near to bursting. Besides when you dragged me over the sharp stones I thought I'd—What's that, Reddy?" For the other balloon had called something. "No matches? All right. I didn't find any pins either except a safety pin in her—ahem—panty-waist. If everybody's ready then we'll start for the city of Balloonatick." And the blue balloon whistled shrilly on two of his fingers.

Then the children understood why they wouldn't have to walk, as Wisp had said, for suddenly a big Fourth-of-July elephant balloon came running up with a saddle on his back, and following him was a pig, also saddled, and a fish; the fish couldn't run as it had no feet, but it could go very fast by moving its paper tail and fins.

Then Wisp and Blue Jumper and Reddy Bounce helped Rose onto the elephant, Dick onto the pig, and Dandy onto the fish. The fish trembled dreadfully when it saw the cat, but Wisp whispered something in its ear and it became quiet right away.

Then they all went down the road toward the city of Balloonatick. Wisp and the circus balloons did not ride, but Wisp was a fairy, you see, and the circus balloons could bounce, so they all made very good time.

On the way they passed a forest with the queerest fruit you ever saw hanging on the trees, and it was making the most dreadful noise—the fruit I mean. Well, you'll never believe me when I tell you what that noise was. It was the babies crying, the balloon babies. That's the way they grew, like oranges. And the babies, or squawkers, some people call them, were all yelling at the top of their lungs.

Suddenly Wisp called out: "Halt everybody." And when they had stopped he explained that nobody was allowed to go faster than a walk through those woods for fear of shaking the babies off the trees before they were ripe. "They never grow any more after they fall off," he said, "and they make such a noise they can't stand them in the city. That's why they're sent to the earth children to play with, although I understand that down there parents think they are dreadful things too."

The little travellers thought it a funny sight to see all colours and sizes of balloons on trees. It reminded them of Christmas, for the many coloured balloons looked like ornaments on a Christmas tree. Suddenly a big fat yellow balloon, which happened to be ripe that minute, fell right on top of Dick's head, then bounced off and ran away as fast as his legs could carry him. But in an instant there was a loud bang which made everybody jump.

Wisp took off his hat like people do when something sad happens.

"What are you doing that for? And what was that noise?" asked Dick.

"It was the balloon you saw just now," explained

the fairy. "He hung on too long and got overripe. He has just exploded. It's too bad!"

They left the forest of squawking babies and growing balloons then, and continued their journey to the city of Balloonatick, where they got off their steeds at the gate and were admitted by the gate-keeper, another big balloon that looked like a watermelon, after they had given the watchword which Wisp had told them.

"Thingumabob!" said Dick.

"Thingumabob!" said Rose.

"Thingumabob!" said Dandy, coming last.

"Pass!" said the watermelon, putting down his spear and turning the big key in the gate, which instantly swung open.

Well, Balloonatick was certainly a queer town and the children were much impressed. At first they thought Wisp had made a mistake and brought them to the wrong place, for there were not any houses at all, that is, no houses like you and I live in. Instead there were only rows of enormous balloons where the houses should have been.

But Wisp soon explained that these balloons were the houses themselves. You see birds don't have houses like ours, or at least not very often, unless some one builds one for them; and neither do the bunnies out in the woods. They have their houses in the ground. And foxes, and lions, and bees, and caterpillars all have different kinds of houses from ours, don't they? So why shouldn't balloons have, too?

The balloons had numbers on them and the streets had

sign posts just as ours do, except that the names would be odd ones for our streets. There were Gas Street, and Empty Street, and Air Street, and Rubber Street, and a lot more like that.

In the middle of a big square place was a big balloon marked "Hospital," and when Wisp asked the children if they should like to go inside, they replied eagerly that they thought it would be very nice indeed.

And what a queer place it was! All the poor torn Fourth-of-July balloons were getting patched up for next time, which wasn't so very far away now. And as everybody said there wouldn't be many fire-works on account of the war, the old balloons would have to do.

Pigs were getting new tails, elephants new trunks, rabbits new ears, and fishes new fins; and all the little stick out places that get torn off on trees and telegraph wires, and even the scorched places in their sides, were being fixed as good as new.

The little balloon people were very hospitable and insisted on showing the visitors everything. They didn't seem surprised that Jim Dandy should be so large, for in their land all the animals were the same size, so the cat was just right. In fact, he seemed to be enjoying himself immensely.

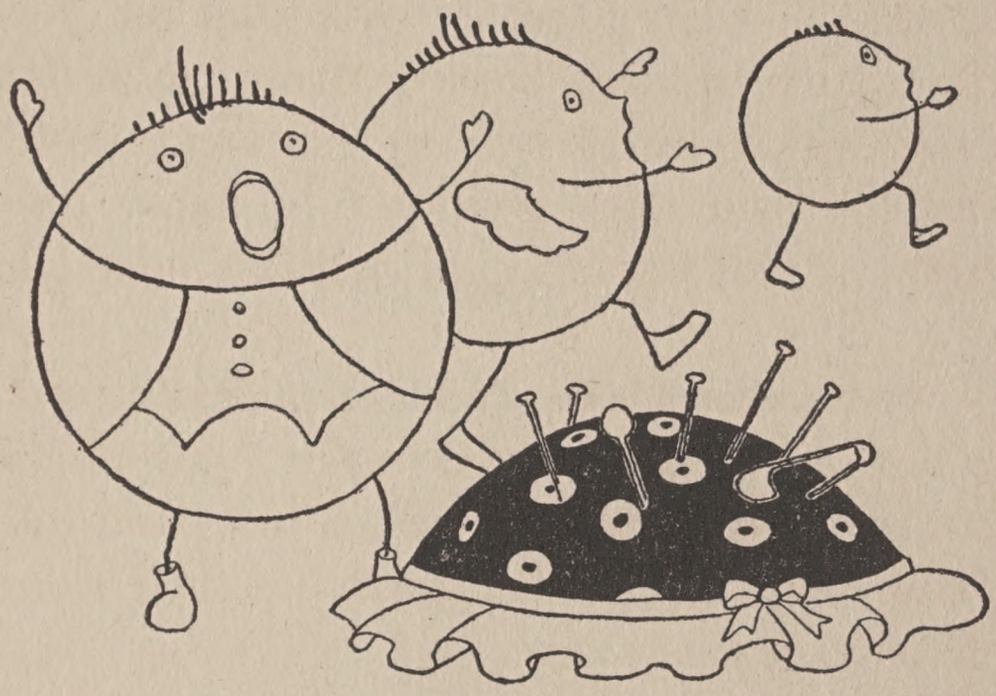
"I think," said Wisp finally, "that we'd better be off. It's getting late."

"All right," said the children obediently, although they hated to leave such an interesting place. It was so different from anything down on the earth.

"Come and see us some time," said Rose politely to the balloons. "I'm sure we've had a very nice time."

"Some of us will be down next circus day, thank you," cried Blue Jumper and Reddy Bounce, waving their hands good-bye.

"I'm sure it's all most remarkable," said Jim Dandy gravely, making his best bow, "and thank you very much."



The Fourth-of-July balloons were getting patched up.

"Bye-bye!" said Wisp to the balloons. "I won't be around again for a few days. I've got a job that will keep me busy for a while. His Imperial Majesty has ordered me to take these dear children to see everything in the Wonderful Land of Up. We thought we'd begin on you to-day. Well, good-bye again."

And in the twinkling of an eye the little apple tree suddenly appeared, elevator and all, and before they knew it Rose and Dick and the cat were descending

quite rapidly to the earth, and in about two shakes of a dice box, they found themselves in the orchard again.

But when they went to thank the little fairy for their adventure, he had disappeared completely and look where they would he was nowhere to be seen. There were only the birds and the bees, and far away the tinkle of a cow bell in the still quiet air.

CHAPTER III

THE RUNAWAY FEATHERS

Chapter III: The Runaway Feathers

OKLAHOMA, the coloured woman who came in to help Nora and Chris clean Grandma Salisbury's house, was out in the yard beating pillows with a big stick. Pillows of all shapes and sizes were hung on a clothes line stretched between two big maple trees, a whole family of them; the granddaddy of them all, a big, fat bolster, was doubled over the line, poor thing, right on his stomach, and when Oklahoma came along with her dusting stick and hit him, Rose and Dick cried out with delight: "Oh look, Mother, that big pillow has been naughty and he's getting a spanking."

They watched each pillow getting its share of the trouncing, clapping their hands and shouting delightedly when the feathers flew.

"Dey's all too sleepy," said the coloured woman, beating with all her might. "I guess dis ere 'll wake 'em up all righty. Dey's been dreamin' long enough."

The pillows swelled and puffed out with indignation. Have you ever noticed that feather pillows always do that if you beat them, especially if the sun is shining? And have you ever thought why it was? Well, I'm going to tell you. It's the little sleepy feathers inside waking up, just as Oklahoma said, and all crowding each other trying to get out into the fresh air and sun-

shine. Of course if there is a hole or a rip anywhere, some of them do get out, and away they go fluttering and dancing along the sunbeams right up into the air.

And so it happened that as Rose and Dick were watching, a whole lot of little white feathers went dancing and sailing and fluttering away over the tops of the trees.

"I wonder where all the feathers go?" remarked Rose curiously, watching them until they were out of sight.

"Why, they just go up!" said Dick. And as the words left his lips the children looked at each other suddenly; the same thought had occurred to them both. If the feathers went up could it be possible that they too went to a magic land like the balloons? But they wisely said nothing about it.

When Oklahoma had finished, Grandma came out and going along the line of pillows looked closely at them all. "I was wondering, children," she said, "since you have taken such a sudden notion to play in that little old house in the apple tree, if I can't find a couple of old pillows for you, so you can take your naps out there if you get sleepy these warm days. And Chris is going to take a ladder out, so you can get up without wearing out your clothes climbing."

Again the children looked at each other wondering what their little fairy friend would say to this, but again they said nothing. Weren't they wise little people!

That afternoon when they went out to the orchard, they found the ladder as Grandma had said. But they viewed it with discontent. "Let's take it away," whispered Dick, "we don't need it." And truly enough the

ladder did look out of place, and I know exactly how the children felt about it.

"All right, it's lots more fun climbing anyway," agreed Rose.

So pulling and tugging with all their might they

That big pillow has been naughty and he's getting a spanking

finally got the ladder away from the tree and laid it in the long grass where it couldn't be seen.

Then they climbed up to the playhouse to find there also that Grandma had not forgotten what she had promised, the two pillows with clean white covers and a clean old comfort to lie on besides.

"Looks just like a bed," said Dick discontentedly.

"Yes it does," declared Rose crossly. "Let's throw them all out." And I'm sorry to have to say that Dick

agreed so heartily that he didn't wait to reply but gathered the pillows up in his arms and was just about to pitch them overboard, when suddenly Wisp, their fairy friend, stood before them.

"Hold on there," he cried, "what are you doing?"

"We don't want these pillows out here," explained Dick, a little ashamed. "We're not babies, and they make this playhouse look like a bed."

"Well, don't dump them out. If you just knew all I know, those pillows are needed very badly in a certain place; and while I think of it, where's Jim Dandy, the cat?"

"We had salmon for lunch," said Dick, "and he's so greedy for it that after he had his share he went out and hunted up the can. He's got his head in it licking the sides for fear he misses something."

Wisp laughed. "I was just going to say that as I was thinking of taking you children on a little trip with me to-day to a place where they are afraid of cats, it may be just as well that he is so happily occupied, having such a good time, I mean. For we won't need to worry about leaving him then. I hate to be mean to an animal. Oh, my goodness gracious alive, mercy me! Look, there he is now." And suddenly the children saw Dandy rushing through the orchard with the salmon can still on his head. He was bumping into things and shaking his head and yowling at a terrible rate, and altogether seemed to be having an awful time.

"Dandy! Dandy! Dandy!" screamed Rose. "Oh, he'll die! Help him somebody!"

"I'll go down and pull it off," said Dick, preparing to slide down the tree.

"No, I have a plan," said Wisp. "We can take him along if he's muzzled, so I'll just say a few magical words and change the salmon can into a muzzle. 'Zim, zam, zickery, zoo!' " he said, waving his hands. "There! How's that?"

For suddenly the terrible can on poor Dandy's head was changed into a nice comfortable wire muzzle. He could see now, and breathe, and even yawn and lick his whiskers, but he couldn't eat nor wash his face. But he would do very well until supper time.

"I'm sorry to have to do it," apologised Wisp to the cat, "but really it is the only way I can take you to the place we are going. However, if you would rather stay at home, I can say those same words backward and it will come off right away."

"Oh, no!" said Dandy hastily. "I rather like it. I always wondered what a bird cage was like from inside out instead of outside in, and the canary has tried to tell me without actually showing me. But now I know. I'll be very glad to go with you."

"Come on up, then," cried the children, and Dandy scrambled up beside them in no time. Before they knew it Wisp had moved the iron handle, and the little playhouse was whizzing up through the apple branches.

They passed Balloon Land on their way, but didn't stop this time. After awhile the elevator slowed down and Wisp called: "Here we are at last, come along everybody. But we mustn't forget the pillows." So Dick picked up one and Wisp took the other on his

back (that's where fairies always carry things, you know) and Wisp said some magical words, so that the apple tree, elevator and all disappeared exactly as they had done before.

"Can you guess where we are?" asked Wisp.

"I hear some birds singing," said Rose, standing quite still and listening.

"And I hear a buzzing like bees," said Dick.

"No, the buzzing is not bees," laughed Wisp, "although it sounds like that. That's the factory wheels going round. But Rose really does hear birds singing, they are all so glad to get well again. I see that I'll have to tell you as you'll never guess it in the world. We are in the Land of Runaway Feathers. This is where all the loose feathers fly to when they get away. But my goodness, if here isn't Mr. Crane himself! He must have known we were coming."

Sure enough up came a big white bird much taller than either of the children or the fairy. He was a funny looking old fellow with enormous spectacles, a little round cap, and a big blue apron that nearly covered him. When he came quite close to the visitors he made a deep bow, standing on one foot, which Dick thought must be very hard to do, because he himself had a terrible time doing it gracefully on two. But Mr. Crane had taken off his cap with the other foot, you see, so he had to bow standing on one.

"How do you do!" he said in a very cordial voice. And then after Wisp had said how do you do and asked him how he was, he introduced his friends, Rose, Dick and Jim Dandy.

And then after that everybody said how do you do again and that they were glad to meet everybody else and they shook hands all around, after Mr. Crane could spare a foot (or a hand or whatever a bird shakes) by putting his cap back on his head.

"How's business?" asked Wisp then, not thinking it wise to waste too much time on manners.

"Fine!" said the crane. "If only we could get more feathers! The Easter bonnet season was hard on the birds, it was the style this year to have them on hats you know, and we've been rushed to death trying to fix them up. I don't know what we are going to do for feathers, though."

"Well," said Wisp with a generous wave of his hand toward the pillows, "we've brought you a whole bunch. Here they are. Help yourself."

"Oh, you darlings," cried the crane, "you dear delightful darlings!" And beaming with pleasure he tucked a pillow under each wing. "Now we can free hundreds of our relatives who have been stuffed and put on hats. You see," he explained to the children and the cat, "we make pretend birds to put in their places so no one will be the wiser. And we bring the injured ones up here to get better. Hear how joyously they sing! Come along and I'll show you the factory."

As they went along, they passed through a forest where so many birds were singing they had to give up talking to each other. There were all kinds of birds there; birds from the cold north, birds from the sunny south, birds from China and birds from Japan, red birds, blue birds, yellow birds and green birds, and

birds with a dozen colours. They all seemed so happy to be well again that it seemed they just had to sing and it made an awful racket really, just as too many bands all playing at once will spoil each other's music.

They left the forest after a while and came to the factory where wheels were turning, whistles were blowing, and all kinds of machinery was buzzing for dear life. And all the little workmen were brownies, who are kind of fairies you know. It certainly was a busy place, for the little brownies kept hurrying from one room to another with scissors, and glue pots, and tape measures, and oil cans, and were too busy almost to stop and talk to the visitors.

Mr. Crane himself took them around. They went to the feather room first where they emptied the pillows—and really it was a good thing the children had taken them along, for the supply was getting very low, just a little heap left in one corner. And then they went to the dye room where brownies were dipping the feathers into big pots of different coloured dyes, and making them bright and gay.

But the most interesting place of all was where the brownies were putting the feathers together to look like birds. They were very smart and seemed to know exactly what to do. They never made a mistake and put a poll parrot's tail on a blackbird, or an oriole's head on an owl. Wouldn't it have been dreadful if they had?

Then a little brownie in a big pink apron held up a little humming bird he had just finished.

SO MANY BIRDS WERE SINGING THAT THEY HAD TO GIVE UP TALKING TO EACH OTHER.

"How darling!" cried Rose, dropping on her knees to see better.

"That's for Lottie Little's new spring hat," explained the crane. "Her mama bought her one with pale blue bows on it, which was very pretty, of course, but what do you think, didn't they have to go and have a bird on it too, a humming bird, right on the side. And that humming bird had a nest full of eggs at home nearly ready to hatch.

"So we made this bird to-day which looks exactly like the one on Lottie's hat, and to-night Starlight, our fastest fairy flyer, whose wings glisten so that he can work at night, will take it down to Lottie's house and exchange it for the real humming bird, which he will bring up here for the fairies to nurse back to life."

The children were greatly impressed by this, and Rose felt glad that she never had any birds on her hats. Once she had heard her mother say that she never would buy a hat with a bird on it, so she told the crane and he was so much affected that he patted her kindly on the shoulder with one foot and said that such news always made him feel better for a week.

Then they visited some more places, the next one being—well, I'll tell you in a minute what it was. Anyway, as they came near they heard a great chattering and fussing and scolding which made the crane frown most alarmingly. "They're at it again!" he declared crossly. "It's those storks. I don't know what I'm going to do if they don't stop quarrelling. You see this is the place my fairies make eider-down comforts to carry the new babies in, and since feathers have become so

scarce, we can't make the comforts fast enough, and these old storks stand around and wait and the first one that's finished they all grab and then there's a fight."

Mr. Crane opened the door just then and stuck in his head. "Hi there, you old pirates," he shouted, "put that baby comfort down. You'll have to earn it before you can have it. Let's see!" And he scratched his head thoughtfully. "I guess it will have to be a riddle again, that always works pretty well. The first one to guess the answer may have the comfort. What—" he began and then stopped. "What—" he began and stopped again. "What—Oh say! I don't know any more riddles. I've asked them all I know. Do you know any riddles, Wisp?"

"Sure, I do," said Wisp promptly. "What's the difference between a porcupine and a baby?"

The storks all scratched *their* heads and thought and thought and thought.

"What's the answer?" Wisp asked the first stork. But the stork only shook his head mournfully. "I don't know," he said.

"Next!" said Wisp sharply, turning to the second stork.

"I don't know either," admitted the second stork sadly.

"Next!" Wisp came to the third, who also said he didn't know either, and so on down the line. Finally, the fairy came to the last stork, which looked so old he might have been the great granddaddy of all the others. "What's the difference between a porcupine and a baby?" Wisp repeated.

"Well," said the old stork slowly, "there's enough difference so that I should never mistake one for the other."

"That's the answer," said Wisp, "so I guess you get the comfort, doesn't he, Mr. Crane? The rest of these birds not knowing the difference, might be taking a prickly porcupine to some earth family instead of a

"We bring the injured birds up here. How joyously they sing!"

nice soft little pink baby." Then turning to the old stork he advised: "Now trot along to Babyland and choose an extra pretty one to wrap up in this soft fuzzy wuzzy comfort."

That was all settled, so they left the comfort factory and Mr. Crane took them next to a place where some more fairies were making funny little feather dusters that their guide explained were for the sweepers.

"What are the sweepers?" asked Rose curiously.

"Why," said the crane, "don't you know how the ground spiders spin webs over the grass and flowers sometimes, so that when the dew fairies come along

with their watering cans to give the poor things a drink at night, the water wouldn't go through, if the little sweepers didn't fly down about dark with their feather dusters and get the cobwebs out of the way?"

"Do you think I could see them if I looked?" asked Rose.

"Well, I don't know," said the crane, looking oddly at Wisp, "it's generally pretty dark when all this happens. But of course you *might.*"

"Do they carry lanterns?" asked the little girl excitedly, suddenly thinking of something. "Because sometimes when I can't sleep and look out of my window I see little lights all flying around."

Wisp and the crane nodded at each other soberly. "Then maybe it's the sweepers. We shouldn't be at all surprised, should we?"

In the same building the little fairies were making ticklers too. The crane explained that these were used to make the babies laugh. "Whenever you see a baby smile, you'll know there is a little fairy around somewhere poking him with a tiny feather tickler," said he. "It's to keep them happy so their mothers can get their work done."

They all laughed at that, even Jim Dandy, who had behaved himself remarkably well and hadn't offered to climb a tree or scare the birds. But of course nobody was afraid he would with his muzzle on.

"Well, we've had a most entertaining time," said Wisp, looking at his watch, "but really we must be going. It's getting quite late and time to be getting dressed for tea, eh, Dickie? So say good-bye, children,

and thank Mr. Crane for everything. Why, I declare, here's our car!" And sure enough, there was the top of the apple tree with the little elevator inside waiting to take them home.

So they all stepped in and then sank, sank, sank ever so gently to the orchard below where Dandy's muzzle turned once again into a salmon can and then fell off with a clatter.

CHAPTER IV

MIST LAND

Chapter IV: Mist Land

THE afternoon bath was over and Mother had slipped a soft white nightgown over Rose's head and pinned up her curls in a cunning top knot so her neck would be cooler. Dick, too, was in cool white pajamas all ready for his nap on the quiet shaded sleeping porch. It was a very, very warm day and every one was trying his best to keep cool.

The telephone rang and Mother answered it, which left the children alone for a moment. Dick, standing by the window, looked out toward the orchard longingly.

"I think it's lots cooler out there," he declared. "I don't see why Mother makes us stay here to-day."

"She says mothers always know best," said Rose.

"They do sometimes," admitted Dick, "but when mothers never play in apple trees how can they tell which place is cooler?"

Rose thought about this a minute. That was true of course. How *could* mothers know about apple trees? Besides they surely would want their little girls and boys to be in the most comfortable place on such a hot day. Rose wanted to go very much, you see.

"I don't believe she'd care," said Dick.

"Neither do I!" said Rose.

"Then let's."

"All right!"

And while Mother was still talking to Mrs. Evans over the telephone about the way to fix the milk for Mrs. Evans' baby, two little figures in white hurried down the stairs, out through the yard where they gathered up Dandy, and thence up the lane and out to the orchard.

But arrived at the tree a new difficulty arose. They were not dressed for climbing and the rough bark hurt their legs. "I wish we'd left the ladder here," said Dick, "Chris took it back when he found we wouldn't use it." And he looked up at the little playhouse regretfully.

"Let's just sit down here on the ground and wish we were up," suggested Rose. "Maybe it will come true."

"All right. Anyway, it's beautiful down here. I think this orchard is the beautifulest place in the world," said Dick.

The children didn't think they were being naughty for running away. They just thought they knew better than their mother, which is being naughty of course, only they didn't know it.

So they sat down and leaned against the tree and listened to the birds and bees, and Dandy curled up beside them on the ground. He was very gorgeous to-day as Aunt Margaret, to whom he really belonged, had tied a great red bow on his neck. If there was anything that Jim Dandy liked better than creamed chicken, or salmon, or catnip, it was a red bow on his neck. Perhaps it was because it was so nearly like purple, and you remember what he said to Wisp one time about that.

But speaking of Wisp, a funny thing happened just

then, for the little man himself suddenly stood beside them, his hand to his cap at salute.

"His Imperial Majesty, the King of the Wonderful Land of Up, sends his compliments," he said quite grandly, "and wishes me to say that he would be pleased to have Mistress Rosemary Geraldine Salisbury, Master Richard Burlingham Salisbury, and Shah Rabindran

They sat down and leaned against the tree.

Alibi Shushan, the Cat, accompany his humble servant" —here Wisp made a bow—"on a further tour of his kingdom."

Then suddenly dropping his dignified manner he laughed at the children's astonished faces, and putting his head on one side he said, "That means, do you want to see some more fairies?"

Rose and Dick jumped up eagerly at this. "Yes, indeed, Mr. Wisp. May Dandy go, too?"

"He surely may," smiled Wisp, "particularly as he

has on a red bow; it's much more becoming than the salmon can, Dandy. The people where I am taking you are very fond of red. When I think of it you little folks are dressed exactly right for the place, too, but there is one thing I'll have to do, that is, to make you smaller. Jim Dandy's all right, but you are much too big, so I'll make you little and then I can put one on each shoulder and climb the tree to the elevator.

So he said some magical words, "Eeny, weeny, tiny grow. There you are." And suddenly Rose and Dick began to shrink until, like Alice in Wonderland, they began to fear their chins would hit the ground. A little squirrel darting past just then looked as big as a horse and the children started back in dismay.

"Don't be frightened," said Wisp. "When you are under a magical spell nothing can hurt you. Come on, let's start right away if we are to go visiting." And setting Rose on one shoulder and Dick on the other, Wisp scrambled up to the playhouse in no time, Dandy following. And the first thing they knew they were going up, up, up through the apple blossoms, just as they had done on their former adventures, straight up into the sky.

"You'll never guess where we are going this time," said Wisp, "so I'll tell you. We are going to Mist Land or the Land of the Mist Fairies! Some people call them steam fairies."

"Steam fairies!" exclaimed Dick. "Do you mean steamy steam like an engine makes?"

"Yes," laughed Wisp, "doesn't steam always go up?"

"Yes," said Dick thoughtfully. "It does."

"After to-day you won't speak of steam as *it,* though, you'll call it *they.* But I won't tell you what I mean until you see for yourself. You're going to find out now why some steam makes teakettles sing so, and why some makes the trains go, and why some makes the whistles blow, and why some makes the flowers grow —but here I am talking poetry, and I don't mean to at all. But here we are!" suddenly jerking the little car to a standstill. "Jim Dandy, you step out first because you have a red bow on. Steam fairies love red because it reminds them of fire. It's pretty warm here, kiddies, but you are dressed so thinly I guess you can stand it."

But as soon as the cat got out he began to shake and make awful faces. "I don't like steam," he said crossly. "It's too much like water. I'm going back," and he turned to get into the elevator again, but the whole thing had suddenly disappeared. If the tree had been there perhaps he might have climbed down that, but it had gone, too.

"Now see here, Dandy," coaxed the fairy, "we've got to make up our minds to take things as they come, besides you ought to like steam. I never knew a cat who didn't like a teakettle."

This mollified the Persian. "All right," he said, "I'll do anything once."

All this time Rose and Dick were so busy looking around at the beautiful things they saw that they hadn't heard a word of this fuss. And no wonder, for Mist Land looked all white and feathery like Silverport did after a heavy snow storm in the winter. The trees, which

were very small, were white, the flowers and leaves were white and the ferns were white. You see they weren't green covered with white, like earth trees in a snow storm, but they were white all through, for they were made of mist. And there were no houses that the children could see; but then that wasn't odd, for mist fairies have no feet, but instead they have beautiful gauzy wings with which to fly.

When these little fairies spied the visitors and caught sight of Dandy's brave red bow, they came swarming in hundreds and settled themselves all over the heads and arms and shoulders and hands of their guests, for although the children had been made smaller, they were still a thousand times bigger than the fairies.

"Oh, you dear little creatures!" cried Rose, holding out her hands for more fairies to alight. They had no feet but they had a graceful way of balancing themselves on anything they touched.

"You'll have to be careful not to step on the trees and flowers," said Wisp. "They are made of mist, and if you step on them, poof! They would be gone in an instant."

Just then they heard a wonderful singing noise that came nearer and nearer every instant. "Here come the teakettle fairies," cried Wisp. "They are coming for you, Jim Dandy."

I forgot to tell you that all the little fairies had let Dandy alone, probably because they had heard what he said when he got out of the elevator. He was feeling very much offended just now, so when Wisp said the teakettle fairies were coming for him, he felt

much better. He was of some importance after all! You see, being of royal blood it was very hard for him to endure a slight.

Sure enough, a whole host of beautiful little sprites flew near and crowded all over Dandy's back and head, and particularly on his bright red bow! And I guess they must have whispered something into his ear, for suddenly he started away at a great pace, the fairies clinging to him for dear life. But he went so fast a few of them did fall off—but I'm sure they didn't get hurt.

Wisp laughed. "Now he'll feel better, when he sees the big singing teakettle and a saucer of nice cream. As for me, I think it warm weather for teakettles but cats seem to like them the year round. The fairies will plop the lid and fly out of the spout and sing and he will go to sleep. So he'll do very nicely for awhile. Now then," turning to the other little fairies, "where do you want us to go?"

"We want to show Dick how engines go," they cried. "He asks his mother so many questions that she can't answer, we thought we'd show him how it is done."

Of course Dick was delighted, so they all followed the little steam fairies who flew ahead until they came to a track and a station where they stopped and waited. Then suddenly there was a loud whistle and a choo-choo-choo, and along came a little engine no higher than the children's heads drawing a long string of cars; and out of the cab window leaned the engineer. Rose and Dick wondered if he could be Wisp's brother or his cousin, or perhaps even his second cousin, he looked so much

like him, except that he was dressed differently, as engineers always are.

"Hello, Pete!" called Wisp, when the train stopped. "I thought we'd see you to-day. Business good?"

"Not very," said Pete, wiping some grease spots off his face with a red bandana handkerchief and taking off his cap to cool his head. "There's a fellow in Happy Town running a new kind of a thingamajig called the Ocean Wave. And nearly all of the king's guides like yourself are taking the children there. I hardly looked for you to-day, either, Wisp."

"Well, to tell the truth," replied Wisp, "I did sort of think of going there, but the children were dressed so thinly to-day I thought we might as well come here. Don't you think that is the reason trade is poor? 'Ocean Wave' sounds so much cooler than 'Mist Land Steam Railway.' These are my friends, Rose and Dick and Jim Dandy. Oh, excuse me, Jim Dandy isn't here. Rose and Dick, this is Pete, the engineer."

"How ja do!" said Pete, hastily putting his cap on, so he could take it off again when speaking to a lady.

"How do you do," said the children with real admiration. It was the first time in their lives they had ever spoken to an engineer, although they always thought they should like to.

"Oh, I'm feelin' right hearty, thanks!" said Pete. "How's yourselves? Would you like a ride?"

"Oh, yes, indeed, thank you!" cried the children, for they had had always wanted a ride on a toy railroad. There was one just like this in Luna Park in the city where Mother had taken them once, with dear little

WHEN PETE BLEW THE WHISTLE, MORE STEAM FAIRIES CAME OUT OF THE TOP.

cars and all, but Mother was afraid something would happen and wouldn't let them ride on it. So here was their chance.

But I forgot to tell you about what the fairies were doing all this time. As soon as the engine stopped, Pete had pushed a little button which opened something on the engine, and out flew hundreds of little steam fairies just like the ones who had gone to meet them. And when he blew the whistle, some more steam fairies came out of the top. All the time Pete was talking to Wisp and the children, the steam fairies were rushing in and out of that engine, and really the children were so interested watching them they could hardly talk to Pete. Really they wished so many interesting things wouldn't all happen at once.

Wisp had noticed this and now spoke up. "Say, Pete, before they get on, show your passengers how the engine runs, won't you? Just go slowly up and down the track a little while, so they can see."

"Sure," said Pete, pulling on his leather gloves again. "Anything to be obliging, especially when trade is dull."

So he went toot-toot on the whistle, and started the engine very slowly. Then suddenly a queer thing happened. Either the children's eyes changed so they could see through iron, or that engine changed into glass, but anyhow, they could see quite plainly everything that went on inside. And what do you think, the engine was full of steam fairies working with all their might! There was a fire and some water, of course, for as Wisp said, steam fairies can't work unless they are warm, but everywhere they looked there were fairies pushing this and

turning that and pressing on something else, until the things inside that worked the wheels were going for dear life. The harder the fairies worked the faster the wheels went round.

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried the children with delight. "What a funny engine!"

"Not at all funny," said Wisp, "they're all that way." But in spite of his manner he was secretly pleased at the children's joy. "Now then, want a ride?"

They did, so Pete stopped the train and they all got on one of the little cars.

"Where do you want to go?" asked Pete obligingly.

"Let's see," said Wisp, but while he was thinking Rose had spied a big black kettle sitting all alone on the platform with a queer looking cap on which covered him almost entirely. The kettle looked very cross and unhappy and Rose called out, "What's the matter?"

But the kettle didn't answer. Pete, though, spoke up and explained. "That's the watched pot you've read about, that never boils. Nobody likes him here, and he's always in disgrace, because he is so disobliging. The steam fairies dislike him so much they put a dunce cap on him and set him there for all the travellers to see."

"Poor pot!" said Rose, for she couldn't help being sorry for him.

By this time Wisp had decided on the places they would visit, but said it was getting late and they couldn't make too many stops.

"Stop at Winterville, and Raintown, and Dewport, please," he said. "That will do for to-day."

Winterville was the first stop, and when they got off a whole flock of fairies flew past carrying white leaves and flowers and ferns, such as the children had seen growing when they first arrived in Mist Land.

"What are they doing?" asked Dick.

"They are winter fairies," said Wisp. "It's their work to gather ferns and leaves and store them away here until winter comes to the earth and Jack Frost kills all the world flowers with his icy breath. Then these little winter fairies fly down with these mist flowers and paste them onto the children's windows when they are asleep. When the children wake up they are surprised at the pretty pictures. And the winter fairies sit on the bare tree branches, too, and make them shine all over like diamonds, so the children see them on their way to school and clap their hands and cry, 'Oh, look at the pretty frost!'

"When all the time it's the pretty little winter fairies shivering out there in the cold just to make them happy. That's why the fairies like heat. They can't fly up here again until the hot sun warms them. Then they fly straight up the sunbeams into the sky."

"How pretty!" cried Rose, "do they make snow, too?"

"Yes, in a way they do," answered Wisp thoughtfully. "When the fairies up here think the earth needs a snow storm to cover the roots of growing things to protect them from bitter winter winds, they gather up great armfuls of white mist from the mist hills here and fly down with it through the air. The mist gets cold on

the way down and turns into snow. But we must hurry along now if we want to go to the other places."

So they returned to the train where Pete was waiting, and the little engine started off right away for another station.

"Dewport!" he called soon, and when the train stopped again, they all got off.

"This is where the dew fairies live," said Wisp, "and they are too busy to talk to us now so we must not disturb them. This is their busiest time of year, you know."

And sure enough, the little fairies were busy, but you'll never guess what they were doing; they were mending! Hammering, and soldering and painting and gluing tiny, green watering pots, filling them with water, and setting them in rows all ready for sundown when they should be needed. Then the fairies would fly down to the hot dry earth with them and sprinkle the poor flowers and grass, and even people and animals, to cool them off and refresh them for the next day's work.

The children hated to leave such an interesting place, but Wisp had already started back to the station and they had to follow.

At Raintown they saw the rain fairies all dressed in rubber coats and filling great buckets with water from a cloud. When the earth needed a shower they dumped them all over at once, and it took so much water, Wisp explained, they never stopped to sleep but worked night and day.

"Who tells the fairies what to do?" asked Dick.

The Rain fairies.

Wisp scratched his ear. "Why, you see, the King of the Wonderful Land of Up has a helper called Mother Nature. She gives the little seeds lessons on growing so I suppose she gives the fairies lessons too. But I never was sure about it."

Well that was all. Wisp said the time was up and they would have to go back.

So Pete got the engine to the other end of the train and away they went back to the starting place, where the poor pot with the dunce cap still sat dismally on the platform. And there was Jim Dandy, too, who looked as though he had been having an elegant time, for he was washing his face and looking all purry puss.

And there, too, was something familiar sticking up

out of the ground. Can you guess what it was? The top branches of their dear apple tree, and the playhouse nestled snugly in its branches.

"Good-bye, children!" called Pete after they had thanked him for taking them on such a pleasant journey and got into the elevator.

"Good-bye, Pete! Come and see us and try our sliding board if you get tired of your train," cried Dick. "It's all slippery and you go down so fast you——"

But Pete was gone, and the train and car and mist fairies had faded away, and the little playhouse sank, sank, sank swiftly down to the orchard below. Then—bump!

Something must have happened then for there they were, snuggled up on the ground beneath the apple tree with Dandy close beside them. And in their ears Wisp's voice very far away saying: "Eeny, weeny, tiny, grow," backwards, to cast off the magic spell and make them big again.

CHAPTER V

THE LAND OF EVERYTHING

Chapter V: The Land of Everything

AFTER their visit to Mistland, Rose, Dick and Dandy did not see Wisp for awhile. Why this was I cannot say exactly, or whose fault it may have been, but this much I do know, that Daddy came home unexpectedly to make them a short visit, and their days were so taken up having a good time that the children had not been out to the orchard for nearly a week.

Perhaps Wisp did go to the apple tree to see the little folks, who can tell, but if so he went away again and did not try to hunt them up at the house.

In the meantime the children were having such wonderful times, I'm afraid they almost forgot their little fairy friend. There were rides and picnics, and one day there was a party out under the trees on Grandma Salisbury's smooth front lawn, with tables and chairs and good things to eat. It was a wonderful holiday for the children.

But the best thing of all were the stories Daddy told of the west where he had been in camp. They were all about soldiers, and guns, and horses, and flying machines and things like that. Dick was never tired of listening, and neither for that matter was Rose, except that she didn't intend to be a soldier when she grew up as Dick did. She intended to wear a yellow satin dress and keep a candy store.

There was one story, however, that fascinated both children alike, that was one Daddy told about a storm, a dreadful wind storm, that had swept over a town he had come through on his way home. The children never tired of hearing how the wind had carried houses and people, barns and cows, right up into the air as easily as if they had been bits of paper. Daddy's train had not been quite in the path of the wind, but it was so close he could easily see the damage that was done.

"And do you know," Daddy would say, "some of those things never were found. I suppose they just kept on going right up into the sky, and may be they are going yet for all we know. When one gets the habit of doing anything, it's awfully hard to stop, just like Dickie here who got the spanking last night for jumping on the bed after he had been told to stop."

Yes, they both liked that story best. Of course I haven't told you all of it, but they went over and over it after Daddy went away, until one day Rose said to Dick: "Let's go out and see if we can find anything a blowin'. It would be fun to see a cow fly, wouldn't it!"

So they went out and looked and looked and looked, but didn't see anything but some birds and a white butterfly. Then suddenly Dick thought of the apple tree so long neglected. "Let's go out to the orchard," he suggested, "and play in the playhouse."

So off they started, followed as usual by Dandy the cat.

The apple blossoms had gone, and to the children's surprise tiny green apples had appeared on the trees.

Wisp was a sight to behold.

Nests too that had held speckled eggs were now full of hungry baby birdies that held their mouths open all the time for something to eat.

But the playhouse was there just the same as when they had played in it last, and they soon scrambled up to its friendly shelter.

"Let's tell stories," said Dick, when they were trying to decide what to play first.

"No, let's play windstorm," said Rose.

"All right," cried Dick. "Let's pretend I'm a soldier and you are my prisoner and the wind comes along

and blows you away. And we'll pretend Dandy's your horse and he gets blown away too."

But all at once a voice said: "Be careful how you talk about windstorms, children. They are really nothing to joke about."

Of course it was Wisp. He had come as he usually did without any warning, but the children were more surprised than ever when they saw him. He certainly was a sight to behold.

"Hello, Wisp," cried Dick. "Did you get hurt?"

It seemed a foolish question, considering that the fairy was walking with a crutch, and had one foot all bandaged until it looked like a pillow. His coat was torn almost to pieces, and a big black patch covered one eye.

"Oh, no!" he said, drawing up his shoulders in the funny little way he had. "I'm just doing this to make me look beautiful!"

"But you really don't look beautiful!" said Rose, not knowing that poor Wisp was joking. "When I look at you I sort of want to cry or something."

Wisp looked at her a moment with an odd expression on his face, and then blew his nose very loudly and winked his one good eye very fast.

"Rosie, you're a little dear!" he said in a choked sort of voice. "I want to cry myself when people talk so kindly to me."

And then after he had put his handkerchief away he seemed to think of something and got very much excited. "I'll tell you what the trouble was!" he exclaimed, "it was that old stove, that awful old iron stove that the wind blew up. I was just standing up there

in Empty Land, as nice as pie, I mean very nicely and quietly, when roar, zip, bang, the ground at my feet opened and a big stove came tearing through and hit me. How did I know there was a big windstorm going on down on the earth and that I'd better be careful? I was just thinking how nicely we had cleared Empty Land of things that had been blown up in the last wind storm, when that stove knocked me down and then sat on me. One of his legs went into my eye and another on my foot, and there he stayed thinking only of himself and his troubles and never bothering about me in the least.

"And while I was lying there with the stove on top of me, there was the most dreadful cracking and banging all around me. I began to think there was a war in the sky too, and the big guns were all going off at once. But at last I saw what it was with my good eye, the one the stove's foot wasn't sticking into! It was another awful wind storm down on the earth, and chimneys and plows and chicken coops and scarecrows and rain barrels and a million other things came popping up all around me. The place was a sight to behold, and here we fairies, as I said before, had just got it cleared up after the last storm. Earth people don't know what an awful trial tornadoes are to us in the Wonderful Land of Up. That's why we have Empty Land, just for the poor blown-up things to come to. But if these storms keep up we shall certainly have to change the name of the place. It's hardly ever empty any more."

"We were just wondering," said Dick, "where all the things went."

"Well—that's where," answered Wisp, sighing loudly. Then suddenly he had an idea. "I'll tell you what!" he exclaimed. "I'm going up there again right now, and how would you like to go along? I really didn't expect to take you on an adventure to-day when there is so much work to do, I just came down because I got lonesome and wanted sympathy, and I thought I'd hunt you up; but when I think of it you might be very useful. I can lean on Dick's strong shoulder here when my crutch tires me, and Rose can help me guess where things belong." Wisp sighed again. "It's an awful mess up there!"

"May Dandy go too?" asked Dick.

"Why, of course. We'll need him, too, he's so wise. But he must promise not to chase the chickens."

"All right, I promise," said the cat rising and yawning.

So Wisp moved the starter and away they went, playhouse, children, fairy, cat and all, right up through the apple branches, up, and up, and up some more, until they must have been on the seventeenth floor of the sky. And there they were!

The playhouse stopped and they all got out, Wisp limping dreadfully. But as he was always thinking of some one else, he thought of the cat now, and saying some magical words, Dandy began to grow until he was as large as the children. This performance put a thought into Dick's head. "Can't fairies cure them-

selves," he asked, "when they are always doing things for other people?"

"Not very well," replied Wisp, "but we can cure each other. I've been hunting all day for one of my people, but they are all as busy as I am I guess, I couldn't find one. There! I just knew how it would be. Do you hear them crying in a dozen different languages?"

"Who?" asked Rose.

"Why, the broom, and the pig, and the wheelbarrow, and all the rest of them! They want to go home, but one talks French, another Spanish, another Italian, every language under the sun almost, depending upon what kind of a family they belonged to before they blew up here. How do *I* know where they live? It's an awful mess—an awful mess!"

"This place isn't pretty like Mist Land—or Feather Land," said Rose looking around.

"Oh this!" said Wisp contemptuously, with a scornful wave of his hand. "Why, I told you we just keep this as a sort of store room for the tornado things. But I think we'll change the name from Empty Land to the Land of Everything. I'll speak to the king about it to-morrow. If we didn't keep a place like this for them to come to, they'd go bursting into some decent place and kill a lot of fairies and spoil everything. And dear knows we can't spare any of the feather workers, or dew fairies, or steam fairies, or any of them."

Just then there was a terrible squealing and a pig came along, big tears running down his face.

"Squee—squee—squee," cried the pig.

"Oh, you poor piggie!" cried Rose, suddenly feeling sorry for him. "Are you lost from your mama?"

"Mama nothing," spoke up the cat, "don't you understand what he's saying? But of course you don't for you haven't nine lives so you can't understand nine languages as I can, neither are you a Persian. The silly thing is saying that the wind blew the curl out of his tail."

"Well, I do declare," remarked Wisp with amazement, "if it hasn't!"

And as for Dick he was so amused that he had to hop up and down on one leg and then the other. But Rose truly felt sorry when she saw the pig crying. "Don't laugh at him," she said. "Let's try to help him. I guess he feels just as bad as little girls do who haven't any curls at all. I know what I'll do! Betty Brown's mama does it to Betty's hair, because she hasn't any curls. I'll put a curl paper on his tail."

Everybody was too surprised to speak, but Rose, finding a scrap of paper, twisted it up and then rolled piggie's tail in it and fastened it securely with a safety pin. And the pig was so proud and saucy again he forgot all about being homesick for awhile, and ran away squealing with delight.

Then along came a broom running around in a distracted sort of way, and talking to itself quite rapidly in some strange language.

"What in the world is *he* saying?" asked Wisp helplessly.

Jim Dandy listened carefully for a minute, with his hand behind his ear. "Why," said he, "the broom says

he was a perfectly good scare-crow before the storm, but the wind blew off his arms and all his clothes."

"Well, what do you think of that!" said Wisp. "Now what shall we do?"

"Mr. Wisp," said Rose, "couldn't you spare him your coat? It's all ragged now anyway, and really you—you don't look so very much like a fairy in it."

"My coat!" said Wisp surprised. "Why I never thought I looked so much like a scare-crow as all that. But of course he may have it, if he wants it." And Wisp was just about to take it off when the broom started to jabber some more in his queer way.

"Now what?" asked Wisp.

"He says," explained Dandy, "that it's purple and the crows would not be a bit afraid of him if he wore it, for it wouldn't fool them a bit. They would know he was no farmer, for they only wear black or brown clothes and sometimes blue overalls."

"I know what to do," cried Dick. "There's lots of straw all around here, so we can make a straw scare-crow out of him and tie on sticks for arms."

"My, that's a splendid idea," said Wisp. "I'm gladder every minute I brought you people along, you've been such a help."

So they fixed up the broom and found an old pan for a hat, and he was quite happy again.

Next they heard something crying near their feet, and looking down they discovered a nest with a lot of eggs in it that had been hidden under the straw.

"What's wrong?" asked Wisp.

"Oy—wong—chu—ling—how!" cried the eggs. "Ying—loi—sing—wu—chin."

"My, my, that's too bad!" said the fairy, "don't you think so, children?" But of course he had no idea what the eggs were talking about.

But Dandy was listening again. "They are Cochin eggs," he explained, "and talk Chinese. They want their mama, too, they say."

"Their mama! Why you aren't chickens yet," exclaimed Wisp, "you're only eggs!"

"Yes, we are," they said, "we are chickens inside of us and we'll be chickens outside, too, if we are kept warm until to-morrow," and they began to cry again.

"Well, well, here is a pretty kettle of fish, I mean nest of eggs!" said the fairy, rather bewildered, for he was really having a great deal of trouble all at once. "Does any one see a hen anywhere?"

But nobody saw a hen. Then suddenly Dick cried, "I see a rooster away over there."

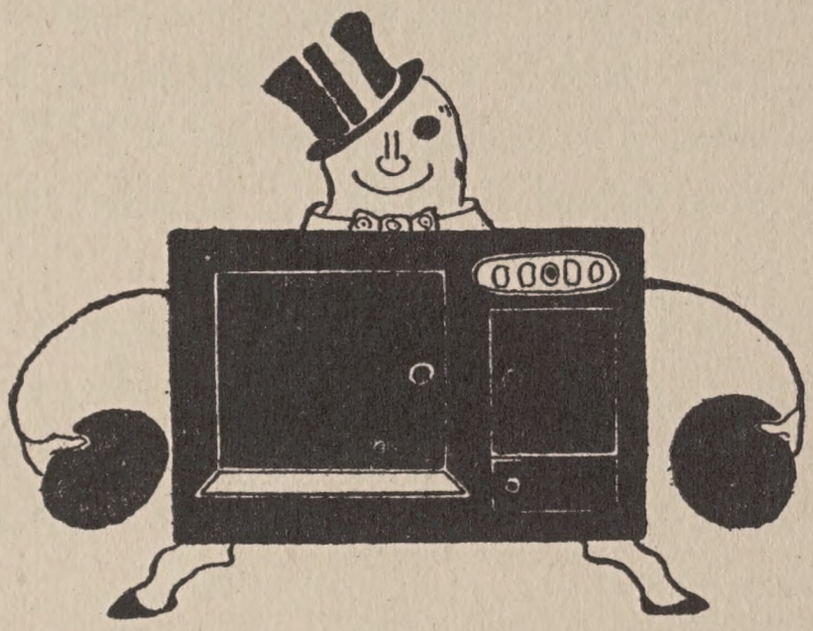
"Then hurry and get him," said the fairy, for an idea had occurred to him.

So Dick chased the rooster and caught him, and Wisp set him down fussing and scolding on the nest of eggs, and told him to stay there. "Now, Mr. Cock-a-Doodle, don't you move until those eggs are hatched, or I'll change you into a caterpillar and the other chickens will eat you," he warned.

The rooster was so cross he said something dreadful, but he, too, was talking some queer language and so no one could understand, and Jim Dandy thought it best

not to repeat his remark. Anyway he stayed where he was for he didn't want to be turned into a caterpillar.

Well, they were all kept busy for awhile, I tell you, helping those poor tornado things. They found a rain barrel that had lost its water, and its hoops were getting so loose already they were almost falling off. Really, that rain barrel was so dry it couldn't even cry. So they



"I've come to apologise," said the stove.

found a pump that obligingly filled the barrel, and so *that* was all right.

And next they put a wheel on the wheelbarrow, but do you know, they got it on backwards, and the poor wheelbarrow always had to run backwards after that.

Then they milked a cow and gave the milk to a churn; and they wiped the dirt out of a potato's eyes; and they found a tongue for a lost wagon, and all sorts of things.

Then Jim Dandy in his wise way said: "Mr. Wisp, if you get a paper, I'll find out the names of the places

where all these things live, and the names of all the families they belong to. And we can send them home."

"Thank you," said Wisp, "that's the best thing yet." And he got a paper and pencil right away.

While they were writing down everybody's name, the stove came along, the very one that had hurt Wisp, and it was looking very sorry. "I've come to apologise," it said, "I never meant to hurt you, but I'm so clumsy and I get so terribly fussed up when anything happens, I don't know what I'm doing. Besides, I had lost all my lids; but I have found them now," and he rattled them proudly.

And then what do you think happened? Wisp's crutch disappeared, the patch flew off his eye, the bandages flew off his foot, and his coat became as good as new. In fact, the little fairy man was just as well as ever.

Everybody was so excited that the cat actually forgot himself and said, "Meow!"

Wisp laughed. "Thank you, Mr. Stove, for apologising so nicely. That's what made me well. An apology fixes up everything right away, ask your mother if it doesn't, children." And the fairy shook hands with the stove and promised to see that he got safely home, the next day.

The children were surprised to see the top branches of the apple tree suddenly appear just then. So many things had happened and time had gone so fast and they had no idea it was so late. But Wisp explained that they had better go home and he would attend to the rest

of the things himself the next day, he was feeling so much better.

So they all got into the playhouse after saying good-bye to the stove and all the other things, and Wisp brought them safely down to Grandma's orchard.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAND OF GOOD SMELLS

Chapter VI: The Land of Good Smells

ONE afternoon Wisp appeared to the children in the little playhouse quite unexpectedly. "I came," said he, "to invite you to a party," and he handed a card to the children upon which was written:

"The Fairies of the Land of Good Smells

Desire the pleasure of....
Miss Rose's
Master Dick's
Jim Dandy's
..company

At a party.
On Tuesday June the eleventh,
At any time it is convenient."

"That's to-day," cried Rose. "This is Tuesday, because Nora is ironing."

"Yes, it's to-day," said Wisp.

"We can't go this way," said Dick, "we ought to get dressed. Mother wouldn't let us go to a party all dirty like this. We were making mud pies."

"Oh, you'll do all right," said Wisp. "Besides, there isn't time if you want to hear the verses. They are going to have sort of an entertainment, speaking, you know, and singing; some things the princess wrote. Where's the cat?"

They called Jim Dandy, and then the fairy started the playhouse upward as he had done so many times

before, by moving the iron handle. Up they went through the apple branches, leaving the big world far below, the houses and trees and lake and church all looking like mere toys.

Before Wisp stopped the elevator, however, he said he wanted to explain something. "You must not be surprised at anything you see here," he said, "for it is a queer sort of a place. The smells live up here, mostly good ones, like things cooking and so on, although as people like different things, sometimes they can't agree as to which are nicest. These little fairies go down to the earth to make things smell good, and when they are through with their work they come back here to stay until they are needed again, just as the dew fairies and steam fairies do in Mist Land. Each fairy has some special work, you see; some are chocolate-drop fairies, some are banana fairies, and some are noodle soup fairies, and so on. So please don't laugh."

The children promised, and just then the elevator stopped and they all got out. As usual the tree disappeared right away.

Suddenly Dandy began to act very queerly and chase his tail around and around and around. Then he turned three back somersaults. Rose and Dick thought he was having a fit, and Rose was just getting ready to cry when she saw that Wisp was laughing. That relieved her, for she knew the fairy wouldn't laugh if the cat was in trouble.

Then all at once the children noticed that a lot of little green things were dancing around Dandy in a circle. They looked like weeds, but they had faces and hands

and feet, the children discovered, when they looked closely.

"These are the catnip fairies," said Wisp. "That's why Dandy is behaving so, they smell so good."

"But he might bite them," said Dick. "Cats eat catnip."

A queer little fellow that looked exactly like a nose.

"These are only catnip smells," answered Wisp. "You can't eat smells, can you?"

"Oh, I forgot," said Dick. "Look, Rose, at all the funny things."

As they walked along, the air began to smell more and more delicious. It was just as though Nora was cooking a big company dinner and everything good in the world had been provided. It made Rose and Dick think of Thanksgiving or Christmas or the Sunday

Daddy came home. Their mouths were watering hungrily and their noses twitching like bunnies'.

It really was a funny country they were in, with all sorts of queer shaped houses. There was a big red apple house for all the apple smells to live in, apple pie, and apple-butter, and apple dumplings and apple tapioca, and so on; and a great big green pickle house for the pickle smells to live in; and a cake house for the cake smells; and a popcorn ball house for popcorn smells, pink, and white, and buttered, and sugared, and all kinds, you know. The walks and doorsteps were made of domino sugar and the trees were celery stalks and rhubarb.

But that was only on one street, for in the next street they came to, Wisp explained that was where the flower smells lived, and the houses were different here.

There didn't seem to be any one about at first, which seemed very queer, but Wisp said he supposed every one was at home getting dressed up in his best bib and tucker for the party.

But as they were talking about it, a squeaky little voice spoke up and said: "Please, sirs, and please ma'am, I'll show you around. I'm the guide!" And a funny little creature that looked exactly like a nose made his best bow. In fact, it *was* a nose, and the children could hardly keep from laughing, but they remembered in time what Wisp had said, so they looked very serious and said it was very kind of him, and they should love to go.

So they followed the nose past the pretty houses of the flower smells, and it explained as it went the

names of each one, many of which the children had already recognised from the ones that grew in Grandma Salisbury's garden. And my but they did smell sweet, with so many lovely flower fairies inside! There was a rose house, and a sweetpea house, and a lily-of-the-valley house, and a lilac and a mignonette and a violet house, and all the different kinds of flowers that grow, thousands of them. So you must have some idea of how that place smelled!

Rose wondered why Mother and Daddy and Grandma didn't build their houses that way, like flowers. She decided that she would like to live in a big white lily.

Then the nose took them next to the place where the lovely spring smells lived, newly turned earth, tiny bursting buds, and warm gentle rains; then to the place where the winter smells lived, crisp frosty air, smoke from pinewood fires, and the spicy smells of Christmas trees; and after that to the home of the autumn smells, flaming golden rod, wild asters, and fading leaves.

These smells made the children think of such a number of things, all at once, that they were having a time trying to decide which season they liked the best, winter or spring or autumn, but ended by saying they liked them all.

Then, with a look which said quite plainly that he didn't think much of the people here, the nose pointed to some houses inside of a high wall. "There," he said with contempt, "live the smells of fried onions, sourkrout, boiling vinegar, red pepper, limburger cheese, and mustard. They try to get out and make every-

body's life miserable, so we keep them locked up and only let them out by special permission."

They hurried past this place and then Wisp told the nose they had been invited to the party, and said he thought they'd better be going. And the nose thought so too, as he had to be an usher at the entertainment and show people to their seats.

So they all went to the theatre where the entertainment was to be, and as Wisp had the tickets, they got their seats right away. They were down near the front, so they could see and hear everything that was said quite well.

Over in the royal box sat the Prince and Princess of the Wonderful Land of Up, which greatly excited the children as they had never seen a prince nor a princess in their lives before. But except that they wore crowns and velvet clothes of purple and red, they looked just like other people and Rose wasn't afraid at all, as she supposed she would be.

Then Wisp whispered the news to them. "They are here because the princess wrote all the verses herself that the fairies are going to recite," he said. "She writes a great deal of poetry, they say, and she has come to hear how it sounds."

Suddenly the curtain started to go up and everybody became very quiet all at once. You could have heard a pin drop, I'm sure. And there stood a whole row of little chocolate-drop fairies holding hands. They had on white frilled petticoats, just as you have seen them in the top layers of candy boxes, and they looked very

SO THEY FOLLOWED THE ROSE PAST THE PRETTY HOUSES OF THE FLOWERS.

nice. Then they sang a song, which sounded very much like Yankee Doodle. This is the way it went:—

"Oh, foolish little Jack a' Spandy
Loved to eat sweet chocolate candy,
He ate all day and ate all night,
It really was a shocking sight.
Call the doctor with his pills,
Jack a' Spandy's got the chills,
Stomach ache, and hurting head.
Jack a' Spandy's gone to bed."

Then all the little chocolate drops made a low bow and were going out, but the people clapped their hands so hard they had to sing another verse. And it went like this:—

"Jack would never mind his mother,
Ate one doughnut after 'nother,
Bought a great big juicy pickle
At the grocers for a nickel.
Now he wears a mustard plaster,
Doctor gave him oil of castor.
Some fine day he'll up and die,
And folks will wonder why, oh why!"

Everybody clapped again, but the little chocolate drops didn't know any more, so they bowed and went out.

The next thing on the program was a little pink arbutus flower fairy who came out and said a little poem like this:—

"I'm just a little fairy,
As all of you can see.
I'm very shy and very sweet,
Afraid of all I chance to meet.
So this is all of me."

And they all clapped again, but nothing would bring the shy little thing out again. So that was all of her, just as she said.

Then came a peanut which bowed very stiffly and said this verse in a high cracked voice:—

"Oh, hi diddle diddle,
I'll ask you a riddle.
Can any one tell where I grow?
Do I grow on a tree,
Or an island at sea,
Or up north in the ice and the snow?
Do I grow like potatoes,
Way under the ground,
Or like strawberries red on a vine,
Or on plants like tomatoes
So smooth and so round,
Or like cones on an evergreen pine?
Oh, hi diddle diddle,
Please answer my riddle,
I really have done my best,
And I hope you will look
In your peanut book,
'Til the answer you all have guessed."

Then he made another stiff bow and went out, but the audience was so busy thinking what the answer could be, they forgot to applaud, so *he* didn't come back.

Then there was dancing and lemonade.

Then the rose and violet sang a duet that Rose thought she had read one time on a valentine, but she wasn't sure; and the apple dumpling did a funny dance; after that some little noodles came out and said this piece:—

"If you haven't a friend, or a hundred and one,
If life's all a bore or a barrel of fun,
There are sure to be moments of gloomiest gloom
When birds cease to sing and the flowers to bloom
Now just when you think things have gone to the poodles,
Why don't you try having a dinner of noodles?"

That was all there was to that verse, and Jim Dandy said he was quite sure it was enough.

Then the Prince got up on the stage and said how

glad he was to see everybody and how good the speeches were and everything. And everybody clapped then, too, for you know you always have to make a fuss when a prince talks, or anybody like that.

After that they were to have dancing and lemonade, but Wisp said they'd better go home, as he was sure Nora was making lemonade anyway and it was getting late.

As they left the theatre, the prince and princess were just getting into their carriage to go home, and the princess blew them a kiss which greatly excited Rose. But as the coach rolled away, the apple tree, playhouse and all, stood suddenly beside them, and in a twinkling they were sinking down, down, down to the earth where Mother was calling to them to come and get dressed.

CHAPTER VII

THISTLEDOWN LAND

Chapter VII: Thistledown Land

"WOULD you like to go to Thistledown Land?" The children looked around in surprise for they couldn't see any one, but they were quite sure it was Wisp's voice. They were playing in the meadow to-day, for Dick had eaten a green apple the day before and it had made him very sick, so Mother had forbidden them to go near the orchard.

It broke their hearts, almost, not to be able to play in their beloved playhouse in the apple tree, but they were obedient little children, at least they were when they didn't forget, so now they were making daisy chains in the meadow.

"Where are you?" cried Dick puzzled, for look where they would, the fairy was nowhere to be seen, and it was not like him to hide, when he was talking to his little friends.

"Look hard, and see if you can't see me," came the voice again. "I'm not so big as I used to be. I guess I've shrunk in the wash!" And the children could hear him laugh heartily at his own little joke.

After all it was Jim Dandy, the cat, who found him, for he had been busily trying to dig out a mole that had burrowed a tunnel under the ground. He now stopped suddenly, and began to act very curiously, then the children looking down saw Wisp sitting on a daisy, smoking his pipe.

"My goodness!" cried Rose. "How did you ever get so little?"

"Easy as can be when you know how!" declared the fairy. "I just said: 'Eeny, weeny, tiny grow,' and as something has to get small when those magical words are pronounced, and I was the only thing handy, I just naturally diminished,—got little, you know."

A funny thing happened then. Just as Wisp had said, when those magical words were uttered, something had to get small, and as Rose and Dick and Dandy were the only creatures near, they too began to shrink until they were as little as the fairy himself. They were terribly bewildered at first, for the daisies and dandelions now looked like huge umbrellas over their heads and the leaves and grass seemed like a mighty forest.

"Oh dear!" said Rose.

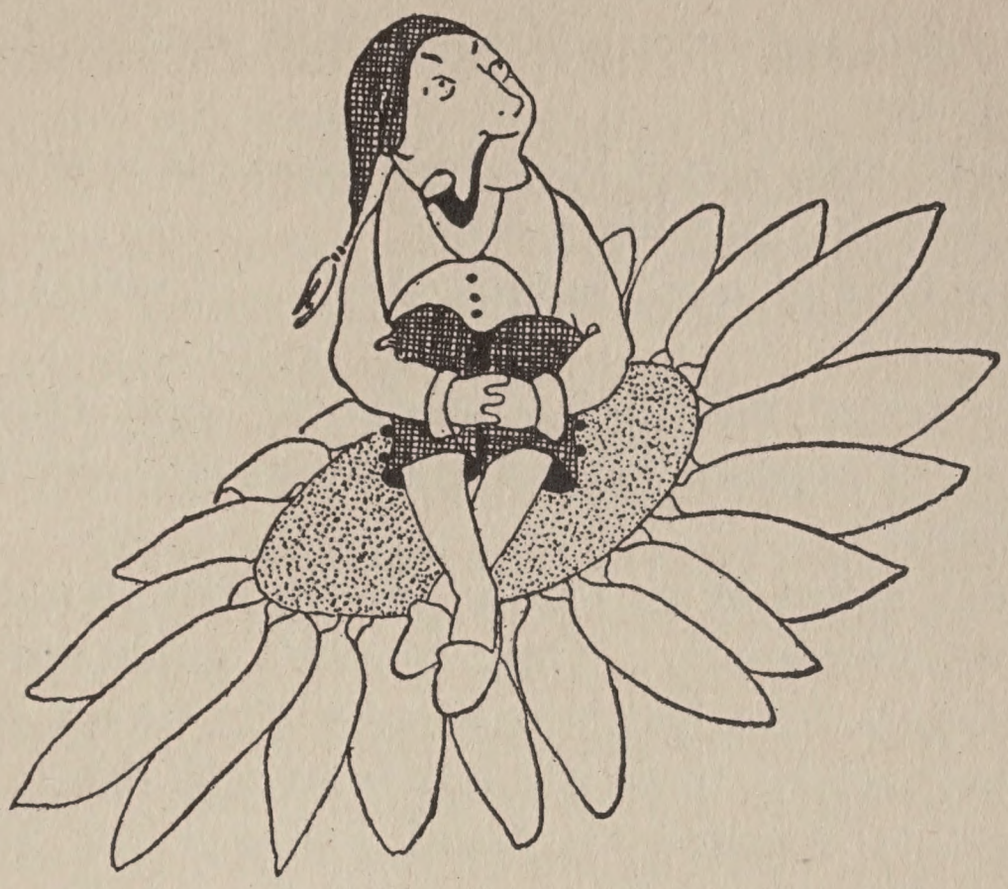
"Oh dear!" exclaimed Dick.

"Oh dear!" declared Dandy.

For the cat could talk now. That was one thing about Wisp, he never forgot the cat. Every time he took the children on an adventure, he included Dandy and gave him power of speech.

"I had to do it," said Wisp, coolly knocking the ashes out of his pipe and putting it into his pocket. "You're not allowed in the orchard, so I can't take you to the Land of Up that way. I decided then that this was the only thing to do, to make you little and let you sail up on down, on thistle-down, to be exact, on dandelion down."

"Sounds foolish," said the cat, who was always watching for a chance to show that he was a Persian and very



The children saw Wisp sitting on a daisy, smoking his pipe.

wise. "How can one sail up *on* down? Don't you mean up *and* down?"

"No," laughed Wisp, "we're going to ride these little white downy dandelion tops right up into the sky. If you look closely you'll see that they are really parachutes and can sail like everything. Hop on, children!"

Wisp stepped from his daisy over to a fluffy dandelion top and reaching down pulled up one after the other of his little friends, and set each one comfortably on a tiny downy parachute. A strong wind coming along just then, the little umbrella-like things broke away from the stem and away they all sailed up into the air

above fields and trees and house tops straight toward the blue sky.

"How lovely," cried Rose, holding on tight with both hands. "I feel just like a bird."

"It is kind of nice," agreed Wisp. "I rather like it myself."

"It's better than flying machines," said Dick excitedly. "I suppose you call us aviators now, don't you, Mr. Wisp?"

"Yes," called Wisp loudly, for the little parachutes were drifting apart. "Only we can't guide ourselves like aviators,—we just have to go where we are blown. But don't worry, if we get lost from each other; when you get to Thistledown Land just ask for Mother Nature's School and I'll meet you at the gate."

Up they went, up and up until it seemed to the little folks that they were going to bump into the sun. Indeed it would have been almost too warm if it hadn't been for a nice cool breeze that blew constantly, and the higher up they got the cooler the breeze became.

All this time the wind had been blowing them toward a great white cloud that looked like cotton, and when they got clear up they were very much surprised to find a little doorway in the centre of it which opened to let them through. So you see the breeze must have been magical after all, although the children never guessed it. How else in all that big sky could they have reached the very same spot at the very same time if that wind had not been caused by the fairies!

And when they floated up through the opening, the cloud closed after them, and suddenly it wasn't a cloud

at all, but a beautiful green country full of flowers and trees, and the blue sky seemed to be as far away as ever. But the thing which astonished the children the most was the behaviour of their parachute. The little dandelion things had suddenly taken unto themselves feet and were walking away.

Wisp called after them sharply.

"You'd better mind your manners, and be a little more polite. What would Mother Nature say if she knew company had come and were left standing out in the road without any idea of where to go?"

The little seeds came back right away, looking very sorry. Oh, yes, the little parachute things were seeds, you may as well know it now as later. All the little fuzzy, wuzzy things on dandelions, or thistles, or milkweed when it is ripe, or anything like that, are really seeds. If you look 'way down in the middle of each little feathery piece, you will see a little pin point of a thing, and that's the seed.

"Excuse us," they said. "We forgot all about you, we were so anxious to get there. We're late for school you see, but if you will please come along, we'll show you the way."

So Rose and Dick and Dandy and Wisp followed the seeds until they came to a great high hedge, in which was a great gate covered by a green vine. The little seeds knocked and instantly the gate was opened and they all went inside.

Then the most curious sight you can imagine met the children's eyes. They were in a sort of garden, yet it wasn't exactly a garden either, for there were rows and

rows of little desks and chairs like you see in a schoolroom, only there were hundreds of them, instead of just thirty or forty. The aisles were of green grass, for walls there were high green hedges, and the only roof was the blue sky high overhead. It was certainly a most attractive school and one felt that lessons learned in such a beautiful place would never be forgotten.

Away up front in a chair made of white birch bark sat a beautiful lady who nodded a kindly welcome to the visitors and asked them to sit down.

Of course they were all very small as I told you before, so they sat in some of the tiny chairs at the end of a row where some of the scholars were absent. The little dandelion seeds sat right in front of them looking very nervous, for Mother Nature was calling the roll.

"Sadie Thistle," she called, looking in a big book.

"Present!" said Sadie, in a funny weak little voice.

"Jimmy Milk Weed!"

"Present."

And so on down the line. Then she came to the dandelion seeds. She called, "Tommy Dandelion."

"Late," spoke up one of the little seeds.

"Billy Dandelion!"

"Late," answered Billy.

"Dick Dandelion!"

"Late!"

"Charley Dandelion!"

"Late!"

The big book snapped shut. "What was wrong to-

THE LITTLE DANDELION SEEDS WERE LOOKING VERY NERVOUS, FOR MOTHER NATURE WAS CALLING THE ROLL.

day, boys? Didn't your Mama have you ready in time?"

Then Wisp decided it was time to explain. He stood up. "If you please, ma'am, I'm afraid it was our fault. Tom and Billy and Dick and Charley Dandelion could have flown faster if we hadn't been riding them. I'm sorry if we kept them late, and if they have to be punished, can't we take it instead?"

"No!" answered the teacher, smiling kindly, "punishment never rights a wrong, no matter who takes it. But my pupils must learn never to be late. Now for lessons." And she opened another book. "First we'll have a review of what we learned yesterday."

"Nanny Plume Thistle, Johnny Cotton Thistle and Dan Globe Thistle come up front." The little seeds got out of their chairs and fairly floated up the aisle.

"Nanny, what is your favourite colour?"

"Red," answered the little seed.

"What is yours, Johnny?"

"White," answered he.

"Yours, Dan?"

"Blue," said Dan promptly.

"That's right. And when you blow down to the earth and take root and grow, always remember what colour of flowers each of you must bear. Now where did I tell you to grow?"

"Across the road from Widow McBride's cottage," answered the little seeds all together.

"That's correct again, and be sure to work hard and bloom well. Every time she looks out of her door she must see your beautiful red, and white, and blue flowers,

and think of the flag her boy is fighting for. But be sure to keep well back from the road so your sharp points won't prick the little bare feet of children as they pass."

"Yes, ma'am!" answered the little seeds.

"That will do. You may go to your seats now."

"Laura and Alice Dandelion," she called next, and two little dandelion seeds, looking exactly like the ones that had brought the children, went bashfully up to the teacher's desk.

"Where are you to grow?" asked Mother Nature.

"On the hill opposite the factory," said the little seeds together.

"Why?"

"Because the people who work there have no flowers and when they have time to glance out of the window they can see us and be glad."

"That's right," said Mother Nature kindly. "But two are not enough. We'll have to cover that hill next spring, so I'll send some more with you," and looking into her book she read out a great many names.

Then there were a great many more lessons after that. The little milkweed seeds were told to grow where children who had no toys could make cradles of the pods for their home-made dollies. The maple tree seeds were told to grow where shade was most needed, particularly where sick or wounded soldiers had come back home and were trying to get well. "Some people have neglected planting shade trees in their yards," said Mother Nature sadly, "so we'll have to do what we can to help

along. Be sure to grow as fast as you know how, little seeds."

All the seeds that have wings were taught something in that school and Rose and Dick were so interested they forgot all about the time. At last Wisp whispered: "School is nearly out, so we must be going. We'll not stop to talk to Mother Nature to-day. She

"This is the school for flying seeds."

is very busy and works all the time; very likely she will go to another school right away to teach some more little seeds how to grow. This is just the school for flying seeds you see,—the ones that have wings."

"I wish I were a seed!" said Rose thoughtfully when they were on the road toward the gate. "I could make somebody happy then."

"My child!" exclaimed Wisp. "What a wish! As though a dear little girl with two eyes, and two ears, and two hands, and two feet, and one tongue can't make

hundreds more people happy than a little seed! Did you ever try?"

"I don't think so," said Rose. "But I will. I'll begin on Mama."

"So shall I!" declared Dick.

"And I," put in Jim Dandy. "I think I'll begin on the canary. I've always teased him and made him think I wanted to eat him. I won't do it any more."

"Oh, ho!" said Wisp, "so somebody else has learned something to-day besides the little seeds! Then I certainly feel as though my time had not been wasted. Hi, there! Going down?" For they had come to the sky gate, and some little dandelion seeds were just getting ready to fly down to the earth.

"Yes!" they answered. "Get on if you want a ride!"

And gently, very gently, they deposited the little travellers on the very spot in the meadow from which they had started.

CHAPTER VIII

SOAP BUBBLE LAND

Chapter VIII: Soap Bubble Land

A WONDERFUL box had come from Daddy. The reason for it was Rose's birthday, but when the box was opened it was found to contain as many presents for Dick as it did for the little girl. The letter that came with the box explained that as Dick's birthday was so near—just four weeks away,—and he, Daddy, might be too far away then to send anything, he had decided to send one big birthday box for the family.

And indeed that is what it was, for besides toys for the children, there was a gold wrist watch for Mother, a silk bag for Aunt Margaret, some tortoise shell knitting needles for Grandma and even a little leather collar with bells for Dandy.

But the children got all sorts of things. For Rose there was a doll, and a parasol, and a dollar bill in a little pink box; for Dick there was a little scout suit, a drum, and another dollar bill in a little blue box. Just what they did with their money I'll tell you later, for just now they couldn't make up their minds how to spend so much. It was the most they had ever had for their very own in all their lives, except the five dollar gold pieces Grandma gave them every Christmas and which Mother always put in the big bank in town, to keep safely for them until they were grown.

Besides these things, tucked away down in the corner

of the box were two funny little things that looked like pipes, and yet they weren't pipes, for they had two holes down the stem instead of one and besides the bowl was different—sort of double, you know.

It was Aunt Margaret who discovered what they were for. "They're soap-bubble blowers, I'm sure," she said. "I'll get a bowl of warm soapsuds and we'll see if I'm not right."

Sure enough, they were bubble-blowers, the most wonderful ones you can imagine, for they not only blew lovely bubbles, but they made little ones inside of big ones, and all sorts of bubbles such as the children had never seen before.

When Mother saw all these things, her eyes filled with happy tears. It was hard to have Daddy away, but the box and the things it held brought a message of love that was comforting, and it pleased her to see the children so happy. She said something to Aunt Margaret which sounded very much like, "I'm glad they will have something to keep them busy now. They scarcely know what to do with themselves since I told them not to go to the orchard."

If she had only known it, the air fairies heard her say this and reported it to Wisp at the King's Court in Happy Town, for that was where the King lived.

Never mind what Wisp did just then, but it set him to thinking. Perhaps, too, this was the reason such an extraordinary thing happened later, when the children had taken the basin outside to a bench near the laundry, where Grandma said it didn't matter how much muss they made. For you never could have one little boy,

A little girl and a basin of soapy water.

and one little girl, and one basin of soapy water without a muss being the end of it all, now could you? So Grandma was right to send them out.

Well, the sun was shining, although the children themselves were in the shade, and whenever a big soap bubble would go up in the air and the sun's rays would catch it, it would show all the lovely colours of the rainbow,

violet and blue and green and yellow and red, all changing so quickly that one moment a bubble was a lovely purple and even while you were looking it would change to green.

Rose was so delighted that she really got very much excited and began to blow with all her might into the blower. She didn't mean to do it, for Dick had told her if she blew too hard on one bubble it would get too big and burst.

But, as I said, she was so excited that she forgot, and blew and blew and blew into her blower until the bubble on the end was perfectly enormous. And when she held it away and looked at it she never was so astonished in her life. It was as big as a watermelon.

But the funniest part of it was that Dick had blown a big bubble too, exactly like hers, and then something queer happened. Suddenly the children discovered that they were not outside the bubbles looking in, but inside looking out, and the bubbles had broken away from the pipes and were floating upward into the sunbeams where their lovely colours were constantly flashing and changing as they rose.

But in spite of the lovely colours the children discovered that they could see quite as plainly as if they had been in balls of clear glass, and that the air around them, and the world below, and the clouds above, all took on the lovely colours of the bubbles. And they discovered something else too; they were not alone. It was very puzzling indeed, but there were four large bubbles instead of two now, and who do you suppose were in the others?

Yes, you are right, Wisp and the cat, of course. Didn't I tell you that Wisp never forgot the cat? Maybe it was magic and maybe it was not, I'm sure I don't know, but there they were all four sailing comfortably in four beautiful large soap bubbles, straight for the clouds and blue sky above them.

Rose did not try to talk, she had an idea that no one could hear her, for she seemed to be shut up in a little world of her own. Besides it was such a delightful feeling to be sailing so comfortably and smoothly through the beautiful sky, that she really didn't want to talk. Probably Dick felt the same way, for he too was silent.

But very soon the children discovered that they could hear, for Wisp and Dandy were talking.

"But it's no place for a cat, I tell you," Dandy was saying. "Did you ever hear of a cat liking soap?"

"No, I never did," confessed Wisp, "but it's time some of them did!"

"If you mean anything personal by that—" began Dandy in an offended tone, but Wisp did not let him finish.

"No, no, no," he apologised, quickly. "Of course not! But you liked Mistland fairly well after you got there and I'm sure Bubble Land is no worse. And this was the only way I could think of to get you there, until the children's mother changes her mind again about the orchard. But of course if you would like to return to earth it isn't too late, I can say some magical words and your bubble will burst instantly."

Jim Dandy looked down at the earth which was quite

a distance away by this time, and shivered. "Then what?" he asked.

"Why, you'll go down, of course."

"Fast?"

"Yes."

"Very fast?"

"Yes."

"You mean I'll *fall* down?"

"Why, of course!"

"But I might get killed."

"It would only take one of your lives. You've got eight more," reminded Wisp.

"But it might be the *ninth* life, and then where would I be? No thank you!" replied Dandy. "I guess I'll stay where I am. But after this I advise you to please consult me about where I wish to go. It's awful to get poked into a soap bubble like this and not have a word to say until it's too late." And Dandy subsided into an offended silence.

"Never mind him, Wispy," called Rose. "He's cross to-day. He wouldn't like to be left behind at all. His cream was sour this morning and he had to drink milk; that's what is the matter with him."

They were all so much absorbed in the conversation between the cat and the fairy that no one was paying any attention to where they were going, or what was happening, until suddenly they were surrounded on all sides by pretty curious creatures that kept bobbing and nodding at them in the jolliest sort of way. The children were very much surprised, but they soon discovered

a lot of old friends, the very soap bubbles they had been blowing that morning, their round jolly faces wreathed in welcoming smiles.

Then another surprise came, for the travellers discovered all at once that they were no longer floating upward but that they were gently bouncing and rolling along on something solid. And the first thing they knew—Boom! Their own bubbles had burst and there they stood in Soap Bubble Land surrounded by a lot of its people.

You can imagine what a pretty jolly place it was with so many pretty colours and everybody smiling and happy.

Pretty soon the children and Wisp and even the cat were smiling too. They just couldn't help it. There's nothing so contagious as a smile. Just try it, little boys and girls, and you'll find that if you smile at everybody it won't be long until everybody is smiling at you, and that's the way it was with the Soap Bubbles. Oh, they were the happiest people! They joined hands and danced in a ring around the strangers and sang this little song:—

"Airy, fairy, funny bubbles
Laugh at everybody's troubles
Help to chase their cares away
Busy every blessed day!
Chasing dirt that makes folks sad,
Shining things to make 'em glad.
Round and jolly,
Think tears folly,
Love the kiddies good and bad."

Wisp clapped his hands and nodded for the children to do the same. "That's a fine song," he said. "It does me good. Thank you very much. But we haven't much time to-day and I'm afraid we'll have to be getting along. But if you don't mind I'll show these children around a bit. But while we are looking, if you have any more little songs you might sing them." The little bubbles were just waiting to be asked, for they started right off:—

"A rub-a-dub-dub,
We were born in a tub,
Where we splashed and we foamed and we played;
We slid down the board,
And with laughter we roared,
'Til it frightened Susannah the maid."

And some fat little bubbles with slanting eyes sang a song in Chinese, or Japanese, or Esquimese or something like that:—

"Kiddy awful dirty face
Candy stickum every place;
Touchy every thing like glue,
Mommy say 'Me whippee you',
Soapy say, 'Oh, don't do that,
Me make him clean as quick as scat!'
Kiddy laugh and say, 'Oh, my!
Nicey bubbles, much obli!' "

And that song made everybody laugh.

"I was just thinking," said Dick, after a minute, "that

I never did like soap very well, but I'm sure I'll like it now."

"That's right," said Wisp, "life would be awful without soap. We don't appreciate it enough, especially the children. But the little bubbles that really do all the hard work, never feel offended because the children don't like them. They know they are doing right and go merrily on keeping the world clean for people and being happy all the time. They come up here to play—this is their playground."

Indeed it was a funny place, a regular playground as Wisp said—great high sliding boards where little bubbles were having great fun playing toboggan, swings where they pushed each other to great heights, a merry-go-round, a see-saw, a place to dance, and a nice lake to swim in.

And all the while the happy little bubbles sang songs as they played. Indeed it was such a cheerful happy place to visit, that even Jim Dandy was compelled to remark that he felt more contented than he had for months, and would certainly feel differently about soap and soap bubbles in the future.

"Yes," said Wisp. "This is the part of the Wonderful Land of Up that never worries the king. The people are never jealous and they never quarrel and the king never has to settle any disputes. Now take Kiteland, for instance, they have so much trouble with those kites they have to have a court house. Indeed the king has to spend a great deal of his time there himself. But really we must be going. I was just wondering, though,

Wisp, and even the cat, was smiling.

about getting home. I'm afraid the bubbles we came in are broken."

But the jolly little bubbles had attended to that, for just now they came pushing and rolling the very same beautiful bubbles that had so kindly carried the visitors up to their country. They were so neatly repaired that no one would ever suspect they had been broken all to pieces just a little while before.

Then gathering around the children the bubbles sang a good-bye song:—

"All aboard for a ride in the soap-bubble car,
With walls of finest glass,
Which is round like the moon and shines like a star
And its passengers all first class.
It can spin like a top and roll like a ball
And can travel upside down;
And it needs no track and no engine at all,
And its station is Soap Bubble Town.
All aboard for a ride in this wonderful car,
All painted with purple and blue;
It will carry you safely to earth so far,
Where Mother is waiting for you."

And the first thing the children knew they were inside of the bubbles floating gently down through the air toward Grandma's house, right past the big maple tree and down into the yard near the laundry, where they had been playing before they started for Soap Bubble Land. The next thing they knew Mother was lifting them up gently from the ground. There lay Jim Dandy beside them fast asleep and nearby on the bench was the basin of soapy water and the bubble blowers. It was very warm and they felt very sleepy; it seemed almost as though they had been dreaming. But you and I know better, don't we?

CHAPTER IX

THE LAND OF LOST KITES

Chapter IX: The Land of Lost Kites

KER-CHOO! Ker-choo!"

Rose and Dick jumped. They didn't know anybody was near, except Dandy, and he never sneezed like that.

They were out playing in the apple tree once more, for Mother had finally given them permission to play there again if they promised not to eat any apples; grocery store it was this time, with apples for potatoes, apples for oranges, apples for beans, and apples for money. They were just beginning to get tired when they heard the sneeze.

"Ker-choo!" it came again and there stood Wisp.

"I'll say 'Hello' whed this dose of bide quits sdeezing," he said, blowing it quite loudly with a large orange coloured handkerchief. "I dever had such a cold id by life. I've taked so buch bedicide I feel like a drug store and still I'b dot better."

He looked around with watery eyes and the little folks were just going to say something kind and sympathetic when he blew his nose again more loudly than ever, so of course they waited.

"Well, why dod't you say subthing?" he demanded sharply. "Dot you care whether I'b sick or dot? Here I ab feeling inside like a piece of dydabite that's going to explode, and outside like a cobic valedtine, and you

just stad there and stare at be. All right—I'll fide sobe other little frieds that will be awfully sorry for be, so I'll just go add hut theb up."

And he was turning sorrowfully away when Rose, little mother that she was, caught him.

"Poor, dear little Wispy!" she said soothingly. "We are sorry, really we are, and you must not be cross. Of course I know how it is," she sighed, "it always seems to affect people so. The last time Daddy had a cold like yours he spanked Dickie, and scolded me, and slammed the door on Mother and——"

"Never mind what he did to me!" spoke up Dandy with dignity. It always offended his pride to think of that awful day. "I say let dead dogs lie—only in this case it nearly happened to be a dead cat."

"Well, well!" Wisp appeared to be getting happier now as he heard about somebody else's trouble. It always is that way, don't you think? "Well, well!" he said again. "So I am not the only one who has had a bad cold! I feel better already. We may as well be doing something, don't you think? Let's see!" And he scratched his head thoughtfully.

Suddenly he jumped excitedly. "Why as sure as you live, this is the day of the trial, and I promised the king to be there!"

"What trial?" asked Dick.

"Why, the trial of the kites. There are three or four cases to be tried."

"Please, Mr. Wisp, what is a trial?" asked Rose.

"Why, don't you know? When somebody does some-

"You just stad there and stare at be."

thing wrong, they lock him up until somebody else decides what to do with him."

"And what did the kites do?" asked Dick again.

"You'll find out when we get there," answered the fairy. "It's all jealousy, though, jealousy! It always leads to quarrelling and worse things. Children!" he said suddenly, looking very solemn, "beware of jealousy. It's the worst thing the bad man ever put into people's hearts. There! I'm feeling fine now, and we'll have to hurry up to Kite Land or the trial will be over. All aboard! Keep your heads in, everybody. Going

up!" And Wisp moved the brake so that the little playhouse suddenly turned elevator again as it had done before, and started to glide swiftly up through the branches.

Up, up, up it went into the sky, past fleecy summer clouds, high above the earth, right into the Wonderful Land of Up, a part they had not visited before. As the elevator slowed and stopped, Wisp explained that Kite Land was the place lost kites came to—and there were so many of them now in all the thousands of years people had been using kites, that it had become quite a country.

"We'll go right over to the court house," he said. "The king will be there, and after the trial's over I'll present you to him. He's always been wanting to see you. And remember to mind your manners and say 'Your Majesty' whenever you address him. My Goodness! The place must be jammed. Just look at the crowd!"

Sure enough, all over the steps, and out on the street, and even sitting on the window sills of the great building were hundreds of kites of every shape and size, bird kites, square kites, box kites, big kites, little kites, kites with tails, and kites with none. But when the children arrived with the cat and the fairy, a very large policeman kite with a jolly Irish face came through the crowd and made a grand bow. "May the saints bless ye," said he, "an' the king sends his compliments and invites you to come inside." Then turning and waving his club, he cried to the crowd: "Make way for His Majesty's guests, also for Mr. Wisp, General Handy Man

to the King. Ma-a-a-ke wa-a-y!" And the crowd divided right in the middle just as evenly as you would cut an apple in two. And the policeman kite swinging his club and looking very important led the way into the building where the crowd was even greater than outside.

But here again they made way for the newcomers and Rose and Dick and Wisp and Jim Dandy were ushered to seats away up front where they could see and hear everything.

It really promised to be very interesting, for the King of the Wonderful Land of Up himself was there sitting on a great throne and dressed gorgeously in purple and gold with a golden crown on his head that really reached half way to the ceiling.

Then a funny thing happened. The king winked—winked, mind you, at Jim Dandy. The very idea of a king winking! But that's exactly what he did. And Jim Dandy winked back.

Wisp saw it all and scratched his head in a puzzled way, then suddenly he had an idea and whispered to Dick: "I know why he did that," for of course the children had seen it too, "it was because the cat is of royal blood and that seems to count. A king can wink at another king if he wants to."

But when Rose heard it she said thoughtfully: "Maybe that's it, but I think it's because the books all say: 'A cat can look at a king,' and it's sort of a little joke they have. But we must keep quiet!"

Just then two policeman kites brought in two other kites—quite large, both of them, but the awfullest sights you ever saw. Their clothes were nearly torn off, one

had a black eye, and the other a bandage around his head.

"They've been fighting again, Your Majesty," said one of the policemen.

Then one of the kites spoke up without being asked. He seemed to be very much upset. "I'll leave it to you, Your Majesty, whether I'm not the greater. Why I've been written about in all the history books and the children study about me."

"So have I," cried the other kite. "*I* am the most important. Just yesterday the scholars in the 5th grade——"

But the king interrupted. "Tut, tut, tut," he cried, and he tapped his golden sceptre three times on the arm of his throne. "We'd better hear all about it first. Now tell me exactly what you did!" turning to the first kite.

The kite straightened up proudly and looked as important as he could with a black eye and a torn coat. "Sire, I had the honor of carrying the cord across the Avon River in England, that later drew over the rope, upon which was fastened the cable that helped to build the bridge——"

"Stop a minute while I let that idea soak in," cried the king, and he pushed back his crown and scratched his head thoughtfully. The children were so interested in watching whether or not his crown was going to fall off they almost forgot to listen to what he said. "Let me see, as near as I can get it, you helped to build that big bridge we've all heard about."

"Yes, sir!" said the kite eagerly and quite proudly. He was being appreciated at last.

"THEY'VE BEEN FIGHTING AGAIN, YOUR MAJESTY," SAID ONE OF THE POLICEMEN.

"Well, well, I declare. That was fine work!" said the king. "But did it ever occur to you, Mr. Kite, that it wasn't you, but the man who thought of sending you over, who really deserves the praise, also my little fairies who carried you across on the wind, and the wind itself. That's the idea! It was the wind, not you, Mr. Kite, that deserves the credit. So suppose now you stop fighting to show your importance. And how about you?" turning to the second kite, as though that was all there was to it.

The second kite, the one with the bandage, now spoke up boldly. "I, Your Majesty, am the silk kite Benjamin Franklin sent up in the storm. I discovered electricity."

Then the king put his head back and laughed and laughed, and again the children were afraid of his crown falling off.

"You—you discovered electricity! Well, I never!" And he laughed again. Then suddenly he got very sober. "You're a very foolish kite; like your friend here you didn't do anything at all. It was the man who thought of sending you up, and my fairies who carried you, and the wind, too. I'll not punish you this time, for you both look as though you had been punished enough for your foolishness, but take a lesson from this, and don't brag again about things you have done. Neither of you has done anything at all. Next," called the king as the policemen led away the two kites who hung their heads dejectedly.

Then two more kites were brought before the king and they were certainly odd looking fellows, too. They

were big box kites, if you know what that is, square like boxes, only very light as they were made of paper. Both were dark purple and were alike in every way except that on the front of one was a big white letter S and on the other a white W.

"Well!" The king put the tips of his fingers together and sort of played a little tune on them. "What's the matter with these fine fellows?"

"We found them hiding!" said a policeman kite.

The two box kites shivered.

"Hiding! Oh, ho! How now!" cried the king. "What were you hiding for?"

"We don't want to be sent back," begged both the kites together.

"Sent back? Sent back where?" inquired the king.

"You tell!" said S to W.

"No, you tell!" said W to S. "You began the word."

"Hurry up!" said the king impatiently. "Out with it. What was the trouble?"

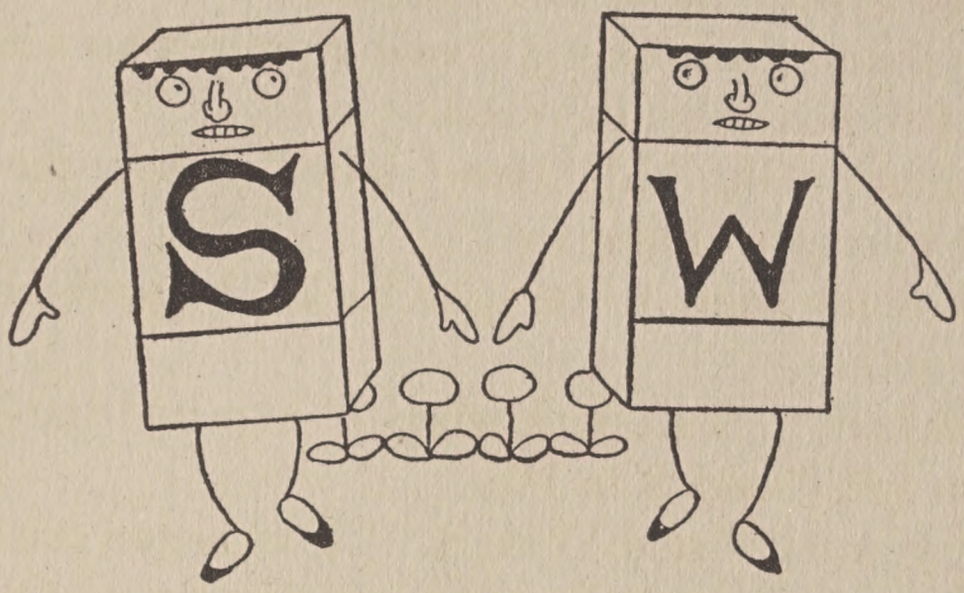
"Well," said S slowly. "We spoiled the trade."

"Tell it all," commanded the king. "I don't understand."

"You see, it was this way," said the kite, trembling. "As we are box kites we go up very high in the air, and Mr. Pettigrew, the manager of the Snow Soap Company, thought of using us in advertising. So he had eleven of us made with a different letter on the front of each, and an electric battery put in every one to make a light so the letters would shine at night. When we were all in a row with the proper spaces between us, we spelled, 'Use Snow Soap.' The idea was to send us

high up in the air at night away over the house tops, so that when the little girls and boys were getting ready for bed they would look out of their windows and see our great bright letters and then ask their mamas next day to buy Snow Soap.

"Well, my battery wouldn't work after I got up there. Try as I would I could do nothing with it, then W here



On the front of one was a letter "S," on the front of other a "W."

got out of order next, and there we were up there in the air spelling, 'Use No Soap!' And all the little boys were so pleased when they looked out and saw us we could hear them yelling clear up in the sky. I could have died of mortification. And Mr. Pettigrew never saw us because he had neuralgia in his tooth and forgot to look out of his window; so there we stayed all night and everybody in the country saw us. And people thought the president had put us there, or Mr. Hoover, on account of the war, as they were accustomed to being told

to do without so many other things. So everybody stopped buying soap right away, of course.

"But W and I managed to break our strings and get away and we came here to hide. And please, Mr. King, I mean please, Your Majesty, don't send us back."

The king was so pleased with the joke—for it really was a joke, you know—that he laughed until he cried.

"Indeed I won't," he said finally, in a very kind voice, and wiping his eyes. Like everybody else, the king liked people who made him laugh. "I'll make you my light-bearers instead, for I think your batteries can be fixed, and Mr. Pettigrew can make new kites to take your place. That will do. Next!" called the king as the delighted box kites waddled away to be fixed.

A bird kite was the next one to be brought before the King.

"What's wrong with this chap?" asked the King. "What did this fellow do?"

"Please, Your Majesty, he's a thief," said the guard.

"Well, what have *you* to say for *yourself?*" the king asked the kite, not unkindly.

"Please, kind Mr. King, I mean, please, Your Majesty, I didn't mean to steal. It was my tail."

"What! Your tail stole something! What nonsense!"

"I mean it was my tail they said I stole."

"Tell me all about it," said the king.

"Well, Tommy Thompson's daddy bought me for him one day in March. And Tommy's mama being away, he looked all over the house for something to tie onto me for a tail. So finally he went into his mama's

room, and there on the dressing table lay a long string of pearl beads with a fan on the end. Tommy thought this would make a fine tail, so he unhooked the fan and tied the string of beads onto me, and then took me out and sailed me away up into the sky. And when the string broke I just had to keep on flying, the wind was so strong, and pretty soon I arrived here. When the guards saw me they thought I had stolen the beads—just as though I were a magpie instead of a perfectly respectable bird kite."

"Well," said the king thoughtfully, "I guess you're excused. I'll send one of my fairies back with the beads, and you may go where you wish."

When the bird kite had thanked him and retired, the guard said: "That is all to-day, Your Majesty. The rest of the kites have been very good."

"That's fine!" said the king, taking off his crown and wiping his head with a purple silk handkerchief. "Clear all these people out then. I've got company and I want to have a word with them in peace."

And stepping down off his throne he came toward Rose, and Dick, and Jim Dandy, and Wisp with a welcoming smile on his face.

CHAPTER X

HAPPY TOWN

Chapter X: Happy Town

AS the king approached, Wisp whispered hurriedly to the children. "Fall down quickly on your knees and bump your foreheads three times on the ground." Which they did instantly, for now that this wonderful person was so near they were frightened almost out of their senses. It was the first time in their lives they had seen a really truly king—and to know that he was a fairy king only made it more wonderful.

"Rise, good people," they heard him say, and peeping out of the corners of their eyes to be sure he meant them, they scrambled to their feet again to find the king holding his hand out to them palm down.

This was rather confusing, for it didn't look as though he was trying to shake hands with them at all. But Wisp settled it by saying in another whisper, "Kiss it!"

So Rose kissed the back of the king's hand, and then Dick did the same and then Wisp—for General Handy Men have to kiss their master's hand, too, even if they do happen to be fairies themselves. Dandy, however, just stood up and arched his back and said, "Meow." I mean he said, "Long Live the King," for he couldn't kiss the king's hand of course. It might have sounded like "meow" to you, but being in fairyland it sounded to the children like the other. That's another thing people say to kings, whether they mean it or not.

All this time the king's eyes were twinkling and twinkling as though he wanted to laugh. Then all at once he did laugh. He pushed his high crown back, as he had a habit of doing, and which worried the children so, and laughed and laughed and laughed.

"Oh, ho, ho! Oh, ho, ho!" he roared. "That's a better joke than the one the kites told me. This is certainly going to be one of my good days when so many things happen to make me laugh!"

Nobody else saw anything to laugh at, but suddenly an idea occurred to Rose. "Did it tickle?" she asked curiously. "Is that what makes you laugh?"

At this the king suddenly stopped, which was queer, for now there really was something to laugh at. Even Wisp laughed at Rose's question, and Jim Dandy was so shocked that he stroked his whiskers hurriedly.

"No, it didn't tickle," said the king soberly. "I was just laughing because I had a funny idea,—not a funny idea exactly, but a comforting thought. And whenever I have a comforting thought it breaks out into a laugh. Do you want to know what I was laughing at?"

"Oh, yes, if you please!" begged both children eagerly.

"Well,—it was this. I should have been kissing your hands, instead of you kissing mine."

The children looked puzzled, but the king hurried to explain. "It's the red crosses you are wearing. Don't you suppose I know that instead of spending your birthday dollars on candy, you gave them to the Red Cross

"O, ho, ho," laughed the King.

to help the sick soldiers? So you are really a little king and queen of the Red Cross and I'm nothing but a foolish old fairy king."

Then Wisp spoke up, for it pained him to hear his dear old master talk so. "But, Your Majesty," said he, "you do good all the time. You are always hunting up some one to make happy, just as you told me to take these children on a few adventures while their daddy is away."

"Oh, hush!" said the King with a wave of his hand, which wasn't really very kingly at all, now was it?

"That's my job, to keep people happy. But when children give birthday dollars to soldiers, why—why I'm just not in it, that's all. But come along, everybody, we may as well be moving along while we're talking. I've arranged for a little tea party at the palace to-day in honor of my guests and we mustn't let the fried chicken get cold or the ice cream get hot. Come on, kiddies," and the jolly fairy king took the children by the hand and started away, Wisp and Jim Dandy following. The king really looked very funny with his long purple train dragging yards behind him and his high crown sliding over one ear. His face was round and jolly and he really didn't look any more like a fairy than I do, and I assure you I don't look like a fairy at all.

The children had lost all fear of him now, and they had started to ask questions.

"Is the palace in Kite Land?" asked Dick, for you know that is where they were when they first saw the king, at the trial of the kites.

"Why, bless my soul, no," said the king, stopping suddenly. "My but I am getting absent-minded. We have to go to Happy Town and that isn't in Kite Land at all. We might have kept walking on and on and fallen right over the edge if you hadn't said that, Dick. Let me see how we'd better go. Which do you prefer, a magic carpet, or a wishing ring, or just your apple tree elevator?"

"The elevator," cried the children.

"That's right, nothing like an old friend. Here, Wisp, that's your job. Run it along!"

And just as quick as a clock can give one tick, there was the elevator, apple branches and all, and they all got in.

It did seem queer to be in the elevator with the fairy king himself after they had heard so much about him. Before this he had only been talk. Now he was real, and Wisp moved the brake this way and that very importantly as though he were fairly bursting with pride.

Then in a little while it stopped and there they were right in the midst of the merry, noisy city of Happy Town. Such a drumming of drums, blowing of horns, jangling of bells and screaming of whistles. It sounded like New Year's Eve, and the Fourth of July and Hallowe'en all rolled into one.

"There, there, there!" said the king. "That will do. Too much is enough, and enough is plenty!"

And instantly the noise ceased.

And suddenly the children were surrounded by a lot of the friends they had met on their travels with Wisp. There were Reddy Bounce and Blue Jumper, the balloons, nodding a welcome; and Mr. Crane and some of the storks from the Land of Lost Feathers; and the stove, and broom, and cow, and rooster from the Land of Everything; and the mist fairies; and the soap bubbles; and the dandelion brothers; and the nose that led them through the Land of Good Smells; and the two kites S and W who were ordered to be light-bearers to the king. And last but not least there was Mother Nature herself, beautiful and kindly, waiting to greet the children.

She stooped and kissed them both tenderly. "I was

so busy the day you came to school," she said, "I couldn't even stop to say how do you do, but I was glad to have you and hope you'll come again some time to some of my other schools."

"Thank you," said Rose and Dick and Dandy. Dandy then felt it was time to give a report of himself and spoke up. "I haven't teased the canary since that day," he said, waving his beautiful fox-like tail proudly.

"That's a nice cat!" And Mother Nature fondly stroked his silky fur.

"I couldn't get along without Mother Nature," said the king affectionately. "She's a wonder—keeps things going all the time, in the world and under the world and over the world."

"I was just thinking," said Rose suddenly. "Are all good things up?"

The king tilted his crown and scratched his head thoughtfully again before he answered. Really it was a good thing there weren't children around all the time asking questions or I'm afraid that crown would certainly have come to grief.

"No, not all—but nearly," he said finally. "You'll find the answer in a little frame on your grandma's desk, right under that 'Birdseye View of Silverport.' It says in golden letters, 'When the outlook is bad, try the uplook.' So I guess most good things are up. Of course you haven't seen all of the Wonderful Land of Up yet, my dears, just the part that children understand. But when you are older there are still many places you will like, I'm sure, and when you are still

older there are still more places, and when you are quite old there will yet be wonderful things for you. But there, there! I'm sounding like a sermon and this isn't Sunday at all. And all my guests must certainly be hungry. Come along to the palace, everybody, and we'll have our party."

The palace was at the end of the street and surrounded by a park full of flowers and trees. And out under the trees on the smooth green grass was set an immense table full of goodies. It really was considerate of the king, don't you think, to have the party outside instead of inside, for the cow would have had a terrible time trying to sit at the table in the big state dining-room. Also the stove and the crane.

Out here people had their choice of sitting or standing, so it was very comfortable. The king sat at one end of the long table and Mother Nature at the other, serving lemonade and cakes and all sorts of good things. And the king at his end of the table dished out the fried chicken and mashed potatoes and everything like that.

Of course if your mama were having an afternoon tea, she wouldn't have fried chicken or mashed potatoes, but then—your mama doesn't live in fairyland and she isn't a king.

And then they had speeches. I forgot to tell you that the watched pot from Mist Land was there and he made the first speech. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I suppose you notice I have lost my hat (his dunce-cap, he meant) and I am proud to say I've lost it forever. I'm not watched any more and I boil all the time," and he blew out a hot steamy breath to prove

his words. "The truth is that everybody is too busy these days down in the earth to waste time watching anything, and as soon as people stop wasting time, if you notice, something happens." Then he sat down.

The king applauded and so did everybody else, for it really was quite a good speech for the poor old Watched Pot whom everybody thought never amounted to anything before.

And then one of the storks got up and explained to Wisp that he had learned the difference between a porcupine and a baby and was very sorry he had been so stupid.

And the peanut got up when the stork had finished and apologised for asking people a riddle about himself without answering it, and explained that he grew on a low bush on sandy ground way down south where it was warm, and hoped they would all come some time to see how it was done.

And the stove told how all the poor cyclone things had got safely back home, and the rooster said all the eggs had hatched finely but one, and it was a duck and had disgraced him.

And a Chinese or Esquimese soap-bubble got up next and explained that the last word in their poem was "obliged," but he had to say "much obli" at the end to make it rhyme.

And everybody said something, and everything was explained so there would be no more trouble for the king, as he didn't want any one to have any trouble in the Wonderful Land of Up, especially in Happy Town. "I've decided, too," he said to the nose, "that

She kissed the King so impulsively that his crown rolled off.

you'd better unlock the door and let out Mustard, and Sourkrout, and Boiling Vinegar, and so on. Only tell them to spread out so they won't be so strong. After a while when people get accustomed to them they will think they are good smells."

But, like everything else, the party came to an end and everything was eaten up. It was Wisp who said it was getting late and, as they had had two adventures that day instead of one, they had better be going. Their mother would be looking for them.

"Good-bye, Your Majesty! I've had a very nice time," said Rose.

"Good-bye, Your Majesty, I've——" began Dick, and Dandy too was probably about to say the same thing.

But the king put up his hand. "Can't you just give a poor old lonely fairy a kiss?" he begged. "Don't 'Your Majesty' me any more, please."

So the children did as he asked and kissed the king so impulsively his gold crown did fall off at last and got a big dent in it. But he only laughed.

"Good-bye, kiddies; come again," he said.

"Good-bye, King," called the children, waving their hands as they went. "Good-bye, everybody."

And Wisp, faithful little fellow, bundled them safely into the little elevator and let them down very, very gently to the orchard. They were getting so, so tired and so, so sleepy.

In fact, by the time they arrived, their heads had gone over and their eyes were tightly closed. Then the little fairy bent over each one and tenderly kissed the little rosy cheeks; then he touched the sleeping cat on the nose to make him dream of a little white mouse, and giving a final look around in the quiet, peaceful orchard to make sure that everything was all right, he vanished.

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